Sin denies supporting Copa 'collective leadership'

STORY BELOW, COL. 2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
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Tuesday, April 23, 2002 ★★ 44 pages / 3 sections / vol.17 / no. 134 P15

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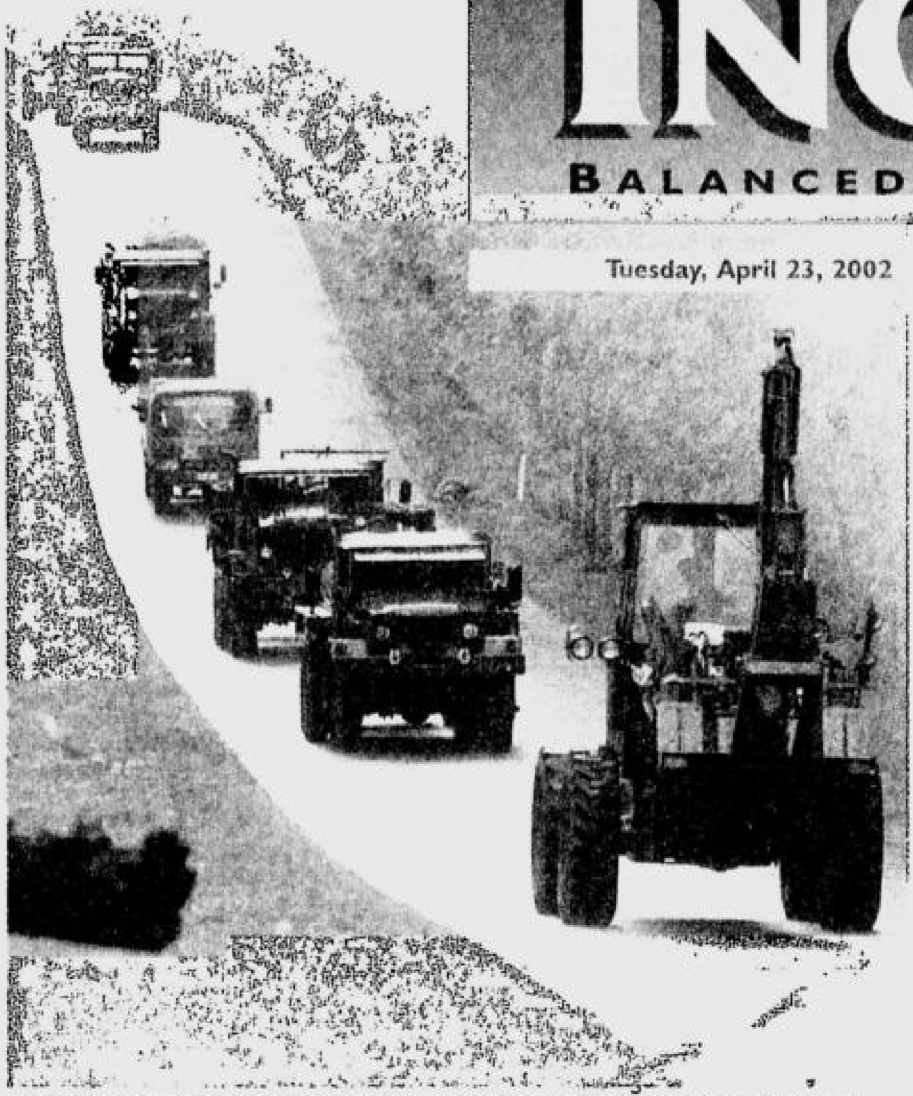


US ENGINEERING might rolls down the rain-soaked street of Basilan on Monday. The US Naval Construction Task Force has begun deploying its personnel to construct $4 million worth of projects. AP

Bomb rocks GenSan again

'Suspect' brags of links with Bin Laden

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau
TJ Burgonio and
Philip C. Tubeza *in Manila*

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Another explosion rocked the city yesterday morning less than an hour before President Macapagal-Arroyo arrived to visit the victims of Sunday's blast that left 14 people dead and 65 others injured.

No one was injured in yesterday's explosion in Barangay Calumpang, 7 kilometers from the Buayan Airport, where Ms Macapagal landed at about 10 a.m.

The explosion, which destroyed a motorized outrigger, came after an alleged special operations chief of the Abu Sayyaf claimed responsibility for the bombings and after police arrested two suspects.

At the airport, the President was immediately briefed by local officials of the South Cotabato-Sultan Kudarat-Sarangani-General Santos (Socsksargen) area.

Ms Macapagal then proceeded to the St. Elizabeth Hospital where she met with the relatives of the victims. She distributed P5,000 in assistance to the family of each victim. She then went to the General Santos Doctor's Hospital.

The President left for Manila at 11:40 a.m. without issuing a statement to reporters.

Authorities are looking into the involvement of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the bomb explosions that rocked General Santos following the arrest of two suspects with alleged links to the separatist group.

But a man claiming to be the leader of the Abu Sayyaf special operations group went on radio, claiming responsibility for Sunday's explosions.

BOMB/A17

BLAST victim Gregoria Daloria is comforted by President Macapagal on Monday at the St. Elizabeth Hospital in Gen. Santos City. The President distributed P5,000 each to the families of the victims. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Guingona proposes change in future RP-US war games

By Martin P. Marfil
and Christine Herrera

CHANGE Balikatan.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. used the occasion of the formal launch of the second RP-US military training exercise at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday to suggest changes in the "substance and procedure" of future Balikatans.

He said he wanted to refocus the annual war games to address other problems, including that of poaching. "It is estimated that damage to marine life caused by the poachers have reached $50 million a year. Perhaps, in response to this . . . we must train, we must deploy, we must prevent poachers from ravaging our coasts."

This was one reason, Guingona said, why he asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to convene the National Security Council. "It is up to the NSC to decide whether there is a need for fundamental change. I have requested the President to convene the NSC to recommend to her policies on the content and essence of training and the magnitude of priorities where our soldiers can be most effective," Guingona said.

The second war exercise involves 2,900 Filipino and 2,700 American

GUINGONA/A17

₱2-M ransom paid but who's got the money?

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

(Last of two parts).

BISHOP'S DIARY
An **I-Team** *Report*

ON THE evening of April 8, several hours after kidnapped Italian missionary Fr. Giuseppe Pierantoni was released, his bishop received a call from his kidnapper. Bishop Zacarias Jimenez of the diocese of Pagadian in Zamboanga del Sur, who had kept a diary on the case, remembers the call very well.

It was Kumander Abu Omar on the line. "He told me that in order to assure the safety of my priests, we should give (his group) protection money." It was not their first time to talk.

On Jan. 21, about two weeks after an attempt to deliver some P2 million in ransom somewhere near Cotabato City had been botched when unidentified armed men took the money and ran, Bishop Jimenez received a voice tape, a letter and some photos of Fr. Pierantoni.

"These were sent by a certain Kumander Abu Omar," Jimenez told the INQUIRER last week. "This gave us

P2-M RANSOM/A18

'State of emergency' reports sow confusion

By Carlito Pablo

DID she or didn't she?

Malacañang was thrown into confusion after President Macapagal-Arroyo was initially reported to have declared a state of emergency in General Santos City where 14 died and 65 were wounded in a bomb attack Sunday.

"The President has ordered the declaration of the state of emergency at least in General Santos City," National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told reporters at about 2 p.m.

Golez made the announcement after emerging from an emergency meeting of the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security. He added that the President would make the announcement upon her arrival in Manila from General Santos City.

But less than two hours later, Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable said that "there has been no recommendation by the Cabinet oversight committee for the declaration of a state of emergency."

"I'm sorry I have to stem the hype on this," Afable said in a press briefing.

He said the committee did not recommend "extra-ordinary legal measures like the suppression of the writ of habeas corpus."

The President may be partly blamed for the confusion as she announced yesterday morning on two radio stations that she might declare a state of emergency not

STATE/A17

'In every Palestinian house...tears'

RAMALLAH, West Bank—Thousands of people poured on to the streets following the Israeli army withdrawal Sunday, happy to be free to walk the rubbish-strewn streets again but filled with anger at the death and destruction from the 23-day occupation.

"In every Palestinian house there are tears," said Raif Manassra, who visited his wounded cousin Wasim Atari in the Ramallah Government Hospital. "It is good to be able to visit Wasim, but I also feel so angry, so filled with despair at what has happened."

Ramallah's dusty, narrow streets bear the scars of the military offensive launched on March 29 by Israel.

The army withdrew from most of the town early Sunday but kept a siege of tanks and soldiers around Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's headquarters.

Israeli armor also remained fully deployed in Bethlehem, where some 200 Palestinian gunmen have sought sanctuary in the Church of the Nativity,

IN/A18

Sin denies backing Copa 'junta'

'Freedom Force' allegedly out to oust GMA

A FRIENDLIER Pastor "Boy" Saycon gets the attention of the President at the Baguio Country Club last December. FILE PHOTO/EDWIN BACASMAS

By Christine Herrera

MANILA ARCHBISHOP Jaime Cardinal Sin yesterday distanced himself from the Council of Philippine Affairs (Copa), which is allegedly espousing the formation of a junta under the name of "Freedom Force" to replace the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Bishop Socrates Villegas said the supposed junta proponents—Teodoro Benigno, former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, Copa secretary general Pastor "Boy" Saycon, Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza and two unidentified persons—visited the cardinal at the Villa San Miguel three days ago.

Villegas, who attended the meeting at Sin's residence, said the group wanted the support of the cardinal and the Catholic Church in their moves to oust the President.

Cojuangco is a brother of former President Corazon Aquino. His wife,

SIN/A18

GOD SAVES US ALSO

After 3 weeks, dog found alive in $50-T rescue

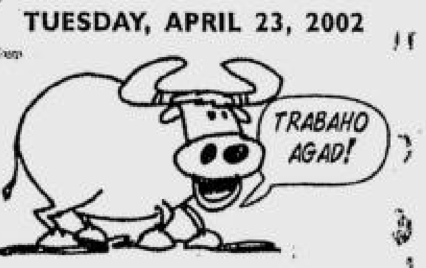
WASHINGTON—Miracles can still happen in this less than perfect world.

A dog stranded for nearly three weeks on a disabled Indonesian oil tanker was rescued Sunday in waters near Hawaii, officials with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) reported.

The 2-year-old mixed-breed terrier was abandoned on the

AFTER/A18

Second FRONT PAGE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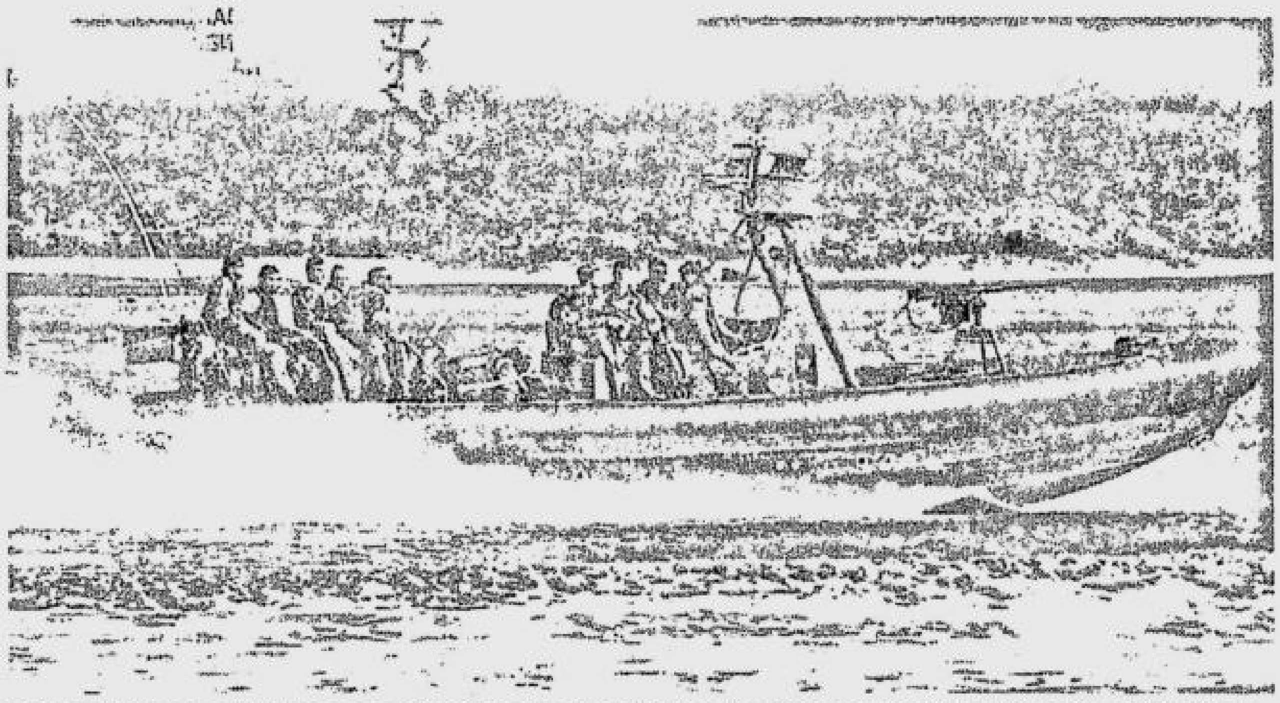
Basilan construction starts

US trucks, bulldozers roll out for $4-M infrastructure projects



US NAVY troops patrol the coast of Basilan on a speedboat as the USS Germantown arrives with 340 military engineers. Their arrival will bolster the US Army presence in the hunt for Abu Sayyaf bandits in the island.

ZAMBOANGA CITY—US Marine engineers and Navy Seabees began deploying yesterday for construction projects in the island province of Basilan, to enhance the counter-terrorism campaign aimed at helping Filipino troops wipe out a Muslim extremist group.

About a dozen trucks, bulldozers and other construction equipment, escorted by US Special Forces and Philippine soldiers, roared out of a Filipino army base in the capital of Isabela to Maluso town.

The Naval Construction Task Force includes 340 US military engineers who arrived Saturday to build roads and helicopter landing pads, improve ports, dig wells and clear an unused airstrip to improve mobility in the joint six-month Balikatan 02-1 military exercise.

The convoy created a traffic jam in the center of Isabela as people lined the streets, waving and welcoming the soldiers like a liberation force.

Accompanied by US Army Lt. Col. David Maxwell, commander of the 160th Special Forces, the troops are part of the 660-strong US contingent involved in "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines," an extension of the US-led international campaign against terrorism.

"We're beginning the engineering projects this week and we will be doing several over the next couple of months to improve the Philippine armed forces' ability to put pressure on the Abu Sayyaf," said Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Gordon, a US military spokesperson.

Gordon said the US engineers would depend primarily on the Filipino troops for their security, but fellow Americans will provide protection in remote areas of Basilan.

Marine Lt. Col. Brian Heamsberger, commander of the construction task group, said they will need about 60 days to finish their work, at about the same time the counter-terrorism exercise would be winding down sometime in mid-July.

Gordon said the projects would primarily be for military purposes but would also benefit the province, which badly needs infrastructure.

The Philippine government has made development in the Muslim-dominated southern region a top priority, saying the area's wrenching poverty breeds extremists like the Abu Sayyaf.

The Abu Sayyaf has been on a kidnapping spree the past two years. They have freed for ransom or beheaded most of their captives. They are still holding American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap hostage.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said yesterday the civil engineering projects to be undertaken by the Americans was worth $4 million.

Reyes said he instructed Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva to use local labor in the Balikatan engineering projects in order to provide livelihoods for Basilan residents.

Reyes said the projects would include the construction of a 60-kilometer circumferential road connecting several Basilan towns, the repair of an airstrip in Isabela City, rehabilitation of Port Holland in Maluso, construction of a pier in Tabiawan, and the drilling of water wells in Maluso, Campo Uno and other depressed areas.

"These projects will contribute significantly to the economic development of the province and the improvement of the lives of its people," Reyes said.

The projects were selected jointly by Philippine and US military officials after consultations with Basilan officials and residents.

The projects are covered by the Terms of Reference of the Balikatan 02-1 exercise, in the provision that states "assistance projects shall be planned and executed jointly by the RP-US forces in accordance with their respective laws and regulations and in consultation with the community and local government officials."

Defense officials said the Armed Forces of the Philippines would be responsible for the security of the US engineering personnel. "US personnel will always be accompanied by AFP soldiers at the construction sites," Reyes said.

"The American engineers will not be involved in any combat training activities," he added. ***With an AP report***

PROCUREMENT REFORM BILL

Gloria calls for faster bidding in AFP upgrade

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called for a faster and more flexible bidding process in the military's modernization program in order for the Armed Forces to acquire the means to meet the current threat of terrorism.

President Macapagal made the suggestion as she noted that the AFP modernization law has been made so detailed down to the "shopping list" by Congress that the bidding process had become too tedious.

"By the time we have a successful bid, the shopping list is already obsolete," the President said in her weekly radio interview.

"That's why let us look for means to have a faster but more transparent bidding process as well as a more flexible shopping list," she also said.

In a related concern, President Macapagal is set to certify as urgent a proposed procurement reform measure in Congress, which is aimed at eliminating corruption in the bidding of government contracts for infrastructure projects and in the purchase of goods and services.

It was estimated that the government loses about P21 billion a year due to corruption in contracts and procured goods and services.

The procurement reform bill is one of the priority measures committed by the government to foreign donors during the recently concluded 25th Consultative Group meeting.

The President said she will wait for reports from the House committee on appropriations and the Senate committee on finance after they have completed initial deliberations on the proposed measure.

Under the proposed measure, the government will do away with the tedious pre-qualification process and only a simple eligibility check will be done..

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GLORIA UNTIL 2007?

Solon wants polls deferred

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A CONGRESSMAN has proposed canceling the elections for the president and vice president in 2004 to allow President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Teofisto Guingona to remain in office up to 2007.

Rep. Gerardo Espina, a Nationalist People's Coalition representative from Biliran, said he would propose this as an amendment to the 1987 Constitution.

Espina, the author of a House resolution calling for Charter change through a constituent assembly, said extending Ms Macapagal's term to 2007 via Charter change would lead to "better performance, less politicking."

Ms Macapagal, who is serving out the unexpired term of deposed ex-President Joseph Estrada, would then serve as the transition president until the next presidential election are held in 2007.

This would fulfill the constitutional mandate of a 6-year presidential term limited to one term, Espina said.

He said the President's advisers and supporters were naturally opposed to the idea.

This is because if Ms Macapagal were to run and win in 2004, she would serve a six-year term that would last up to 2010. A reelection in 2004 would mean that she would be President for 10 years. But Espina's proposal would cut Ms Macapagal's term to just over six years.

In other proposed amendments, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon is for removing a constitutional provision that has been repeatedly invoked by military putschists.

The provision describes the military as the "protector of the people and the state" and has by used by coup plotters to justify their attempts to grab power.

"It is a very dangerous provision that has been invoked by military rebels in the past," Biazon said in Bacolod on Saturday.

The senator said he would also propose that appointments of military and foreign service officers not have to go through the congressional Commission on Appointments.

"I would propose that only the chief of staff and the different service commanders should pass through the Commission on Appointments," he said.

Biazon was the Armed Forces chief of staff of former President Corazon Aquino who had to fight off eight coup attempts during her six-year term.

In Ormoc City, Sen. Manuel Villar said that any proposal to amend the Constitution should be submitted to the people through a referendum.

Villar proposed that the referendum on Charter changes be held during the July 15 barangay elections to minimize expenses.

The Senate President pro tempore also believes that the initiative to change the Charter would go nowhere without the imprimatur of the President.

Ms Macapagal has remained firmly opposed to amending the Constitution.

"If the move will not be supported by the President, it will be difficult to push," Villar said.

But two Leyte representatives said there was a growing public support for Charter change and the President would just have to agree.

"The people like it. And if the people want it, she (the President) has to bow to the will of the people," said Rep. Victoria Locsin.

Locsin said a majority of House members were "very serious" in pushing for Charter changes, particularly on those provisions relating to the economy and to the lifting of term limits.

Rep. Ted Failon, a member of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said he believed there was a need to amend the constitutional provisions hindering the country's total economic development.

But Failon said he would not support the move to shift to a parliamentary system. ***With reports from Carla P. Gomez and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau, and Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gloria admits building up, but not for 2004

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she was strengthening her "personal political organization" known as the Kaibigan ni GMA but claimed this had no bearing on the 2004 elections.

The President is choosing to play coy about her political plans even though her closest supporters admit they have been dusting off her political machinery for her reelection.

"We are strengthening it (the KGMA) not for 2004 but for our needs now. One reason is that I need the help of the people to run our government," Ms Macapagal said during her weekly radio interview.

"I need their (the KGMA's) support and their activities for now, for today," she said.

Ms Macapagal said she has had the KGMA since when she was still a senator.

"I have several responsibilities and I need the support of the people now," the President said.

The KGMA, which is headed by First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, has stepped up its organizational activities and has started building chapters down to the barangay level.

It is often compared to jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada's Jeep ni Erap, a grassroots organization of Estrada loyalists during the 1998 elections.

Sources said that the Macapagal camp has initiated talks for the formation of a new coalition based on regional political parties. The objective is to provide the President with a platform for her reelection bid in 2004.

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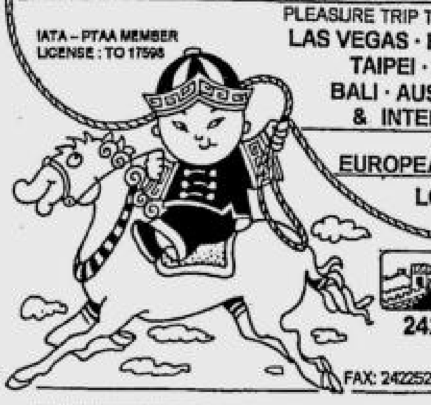

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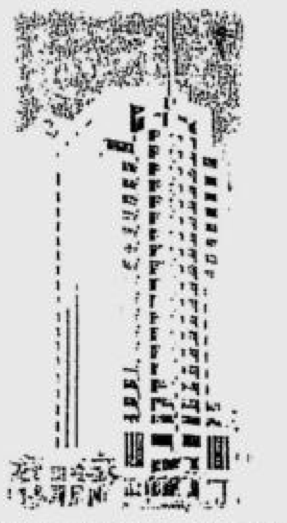

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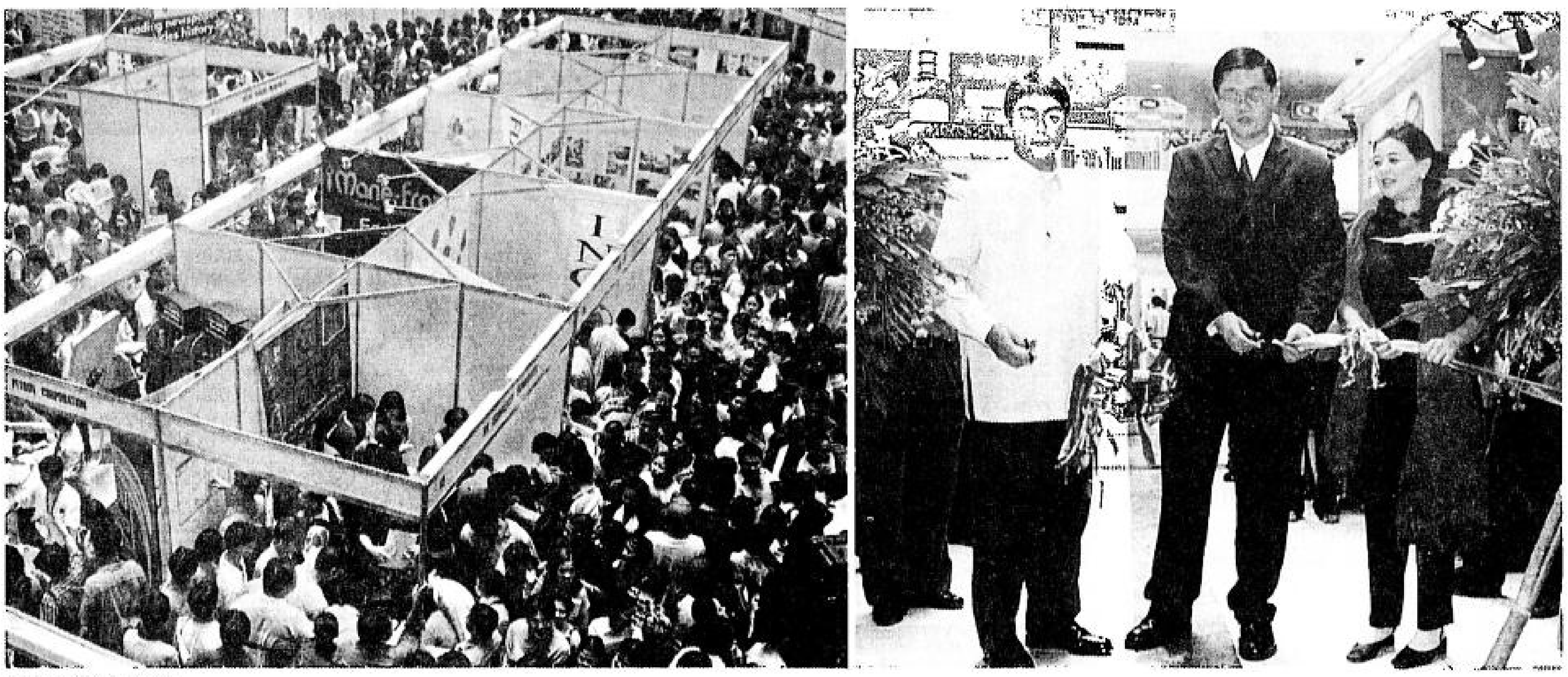

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JOBZ, the INQUIRER's Job Market's employment Expo 2002, opened its doors to thousands of job seekers yesterday at the Glorietta Activity Center. Present for the ribbon cutting were: (right photo, from left) Rene Reinoso, INQUIRER SVP for sales and marketing; Donald Lim, division head for sales and marketing; and Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, INQUIRER president. The three-day career recruitment event is being participated in by over 100 of the country's leading companies.

TNTs may still cast absentee vote, but…

By Armand N. Nocum

UNDOCUMENTED Filipinos working abroad—TNTs for *tago nang tago* (always hiding)—will not be barred from voting in local elections under the proposed absentee voting law, so long as they can show proof of Philippine citizenship.

Fresh from consultations abroad on the absentee voting measures before Congress, Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo said it was decided the immigration status of overseas Filipino workers in their host countries would not affect their chances of voting in Philippine elections.

"TNTs can vote as long as they're Filipinos," Benipayo said, adding they must register as absentee voters and present certified true copies of their birth certificates, voter's affidavit or affidavits affirming they are Filipino citizens.

The TNTs, however, will have to assume the risks involved in voting, like exposing their illegal status to others, Benipayo said.

It is for this reason, he said, he doesn't believe too many TNTs would register to vote.

Of about eight million OFWs, more than a million are believed to be undocumented.

Benipayo said that in the consultations, the OFWs wanted the voting held in the Philippine embassies and consulates abroad.

"That's what the overseas Filipinos insisted on and they are willing to help out in the process. They said they want to make sure their votes are counted correctly," Benipayo said.

OFWs eligible to vote could do so either personally at the embassies or by mail, which is why the voting period abroad could run up to 30 days before the elections in the Philippines.

Benipayo said supporters of the absentee voting bills (one each in the Senate and the House) have promised to rush their approval by June to ensure that the resulting law would be ready for implementation in time for the 2004 presidential election.

Benipayo said the government may have to fork over more than a billion pesos to conduct absentee voting, including the cost of sending election personnel and paraphernalia abroad.

He said the political parties would be allowed to send their poll watchers overseas to ensure the integrity of the elections.

DENR files raps vs Alvarez accuser

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources filed today graft charges against the former head of its Environmental Management Bureau, for allegedly allowing an unqualified company to import and handle ozone-depleting substances (ODS).

Charged before the Ombudsman was Peter Anthony Abaya, former EMB chief.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez approved the filing of the charges based on the complaint of current EMB head Julian Amador, whom Alvarez had appointed to replace Abaya.

Also charged was Antonio Ortigas, president of Elite Adjusters and Surveyors Inc., one of the firms allowed by Abaya to import ODS.

Abaya, son of Cavite Rep. Plaridel Abaya, has opposed Alvarez's confirmation as environment secretary before the Commission on Appointments.

He accused Alvarez of dismissing him at EMB without due process and lying under oath before the CA on several occasions.

The charges came amid talk the Lakas-NUCD party, which Alvarez heads, was trying to strike a deal with Abaya where the latter would be named environment assistant secretary in exchange for dropping his opposition to Alvarez's confirmation.

Cabantac said the Securities and Exchange Commission issued a certification on April 15 attesting that Elite was not registered with the SEC and was not licensed to do business in the Philippines.

Cabantac said it was learned Elite had been given a permit to import ODS even though it had not complied with importation requirements.

"Elite was not even registered as a qualified importer with the EMB. Despite all the disqualifying factors, Abaya (allowed) Elite to import the regulated substances," Cabantac said.

The permit issued to Elite on July 14, 2000 allowed it to import 200 metric tons of CFC-12, an ODS used in refrigeration, while another permit issued on Feb. 7, 2001 allowed it to import 187.5 metric tons of other regulated substances.

PCGG, Ombudsman setup Marcos cases secretariat

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government and the Ombudsman's office will cooperating more closely on the criminal cases against the Marcoses and their cronies, and have agreed to set up a joint secretariat to serve as a clearinghouse for issues involving the prosecution of these cases.

It is a breakthrough of sorts for the PCGG and the Ombudsman, which have been at odds over certain cases, resulting in the dismissal of some of the criminal suits against the Marcoses.

Alarmed by the increasing number of dismissed cases, the two state agencies met last week to settle their differences and work out how they could cooperate to forestall any more dismissals.

Setting up a joint secretariat was one of the "solutions" arrived at after the first ever meeting last week between the PCGG and the Ombudsman.

The PCGG was represented by its two commissioners for legal affairs—Ruben Carranza Jr., and Victoria Avena.

Overall ombudsman

The Ombudsman was represented by deputy overall ombudsman Margarito Gervacio and special prosecutor Leonardo Tamayo.

Even the Solicitor General's office was represented in the meeting.

The PCGG earlier said that 92 of 111 criminal cases filed against the Marcoses and their cronies—either at the level of the Ombudsman or the Sandiganbayan—had been dismissed as of last September.

But this was just a tentative list as the two agencies do not even have a joint listing of Marcos-connected criminal cases at the Ombudsman and the Sandiganbayan, said Carranza.

"Because of the number of cases at the Ombudsman, we find it difficult to keep track of PCGG cases," he said.

"One of the first things that we will do is to come out with a list of all the cases. So far, what we have are tentative lists," he said.

The secretariat would have to systematize the documentation of the cases, and make sure that the PCGG would be consulted regarding all matters concerning the Marcos and crony cases.

As for the criminal cases still pending with the Ombudsman's office, the PCGG cannot really force the Ombudsman to side with it as the PCGG was technically still a complainant in these cases, Carranza said.

Motions for investigation

But the Ombudsman has agreed to inform the PCGG of any motions filed with its office, such as motions for investigation.

"At least, if we are informed, we have the opportunity to state our position," Carranza said.

The PCGG will also be working closely with the Ombudsman prosecutors handling the Marcos-related criminal cases at the Sandiganbayan.

The PCGG had complained that it was never informed of the prosecutors' actions on the criminal cases, particularly of their motions to withdraw that had resulted in the dismissal of some of the cases.

The PCGG is often the last to know about the Ombudsman having filed a motion to withdraw.

There have also been instances when the prosecutors would not even file an objection or opposition to motions filed by the Marcoses or their cronies, resulting in the defendants' victory.

The PCGG cited the malversation case against Imelda Marcos, the ex-first lady and minister of the defunct human settlements ministry during the Marcos dictatorship, and at least two other officials of the ministry.

The accused were acquitted after the Ombudsman prosecutors failed to oppose their petition to dismiss the case on the ground that the evidence presented was not sufficient to convict them.

"Ill-defined"

Carranza explained that the relationship between the PCGG and the Ombudsman had been "ill-defined" in the past.

"The PCGG did not pay close attention to the criminal cases," he admitted in an earlier interview.

The two agencies are considering a proposal to deputize PCGG lawyers in the Sandiganbayan trials involving Marcos cases.

"There may be no need for our lawyer to actually act as prosecutors. But we will be discussing that with the Ombudsman," Carranza said.

The PCGG earlier sent a list of 29 PCGG lawyers, including volunteer part-time counsels, to the Ombudsman.

Question

But there is a question whether these lawyers could be considered government lawyers or could be deputized as many of them are just helping at the PCGG "part-time" while still engaged in private practice.

"But without resolving that, we have an agreement with the Ombudsman that our lawyers will assist their prosecutors both in the trial, and most especially in the collation of evidence," he said.

"At the level of the Sandiganbayan, we will work it out now. The PCGG will ask that we be officially furnished with all the pleadings they (Ombudsman prosecutors) file," Carranza said.

Gloria: No to Casino U

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has thumbed down the proposed "casino university."

She made known how she felt about the plan of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. before they formally presented it.

She said she told Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino yesterday that she was not in favor of the idea.

"I don't want to cultivate a culture of gambling," Ms Macapagal said in her weekly radio interview.

Genuino last week revealed plans to put up a casino university to be called the Pagcor Academy.

He said they would offer open courses leading to bachelor's degrees in casino operations and management.

The President reacted after reading about Pagcor's plan in the newspapers.

She said she would not allow Pagcor to put up more casinos.

She said existing casinos are there only because they are allowed by law.

Korean war vets mark 51st year of Battle of Yultong

MEMBERS of the five Battalion Combat Teams (BCTs) that fought against communists in the Korean War will mark the 51st anniversary of the Battle of Yultong at the Libingan ng mga Bayani today.

South Korean Ambassador Son Sang-ha and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva will lead guests during the 7:30 a.m. rites at the Korean War Pylon. Defense attachés from the other countries that sent troops to fight in or provided humanitarian aid during the Korean War are also expected to attend.

A large number of Korean War veterans from the 10th, 20th, 19th, 14th and 2nd BCTs and their families are expected to be present. These five BCTs served in the Korean War as the Philippine Expeditionary Force to Korea (Peftok). Over 7,000 Philippine Army soldiers served under the United Nations Command (UNC) during the Korean War.

The Battle of Yultong is the greatest defensive battle waged by the Philippines since World War II. Fought at night, the battle saw 900 men of the 10th BCT resist a massive attack by some 40,000 Chinese soldiers at the town of Yultong, North Korea.

This army, consisting of the Chinese Peoples Volunteers 12th Army's 31st, 34th, 35th and 181st Divisions, was part of a violent counterattack by 250,000 Chinese and North Koreans that developed into the biggest battle of the Korean war.

The 10th BCT took 56 casualties (16 dead, 26 wounded and 14 prisoners) in a successful defense of its positions in a gory night battle that began 12:05 a.m. on April 23 while inflicting over a thousand casualties on the attackers. Over 40 other men were taken prisoner by the Chinese troops in the 10th BCT's successful attempt to escape destruction.

Among the dead at Yultong were Capt. Conrado Yap, commanding officer of Tank (Heavy Weapons) Company and his friend, 1st Lt. Jose Artiaga, platoon leader. Artiaga's badly undermanned platoon of only 17 men was destroyed after being hit by a Chinese regiment.

The 10th pulled back from its positions in the afternoon of April 23, the last UNC unit on the western front to withdraw before the communist's "Great Spring Offensive" that inflicted 7,000 casualties on the South Korean army and the UNC in just one day.

Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Castro, president of the Peftok Veterans Association Inc. (PVAI) that counts the 3,000 surviving Peftok veterans as members, said Yultong rekindles the comradeship of Peftok veterans.

"Yultong is the only event apart from the Korean War Veterans Memorial Day every Sept. 7 that re-unites the Peftok veterans," said Castro.

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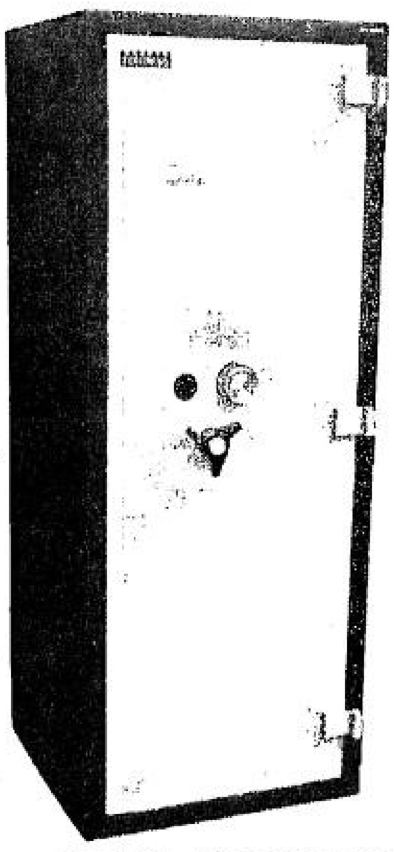

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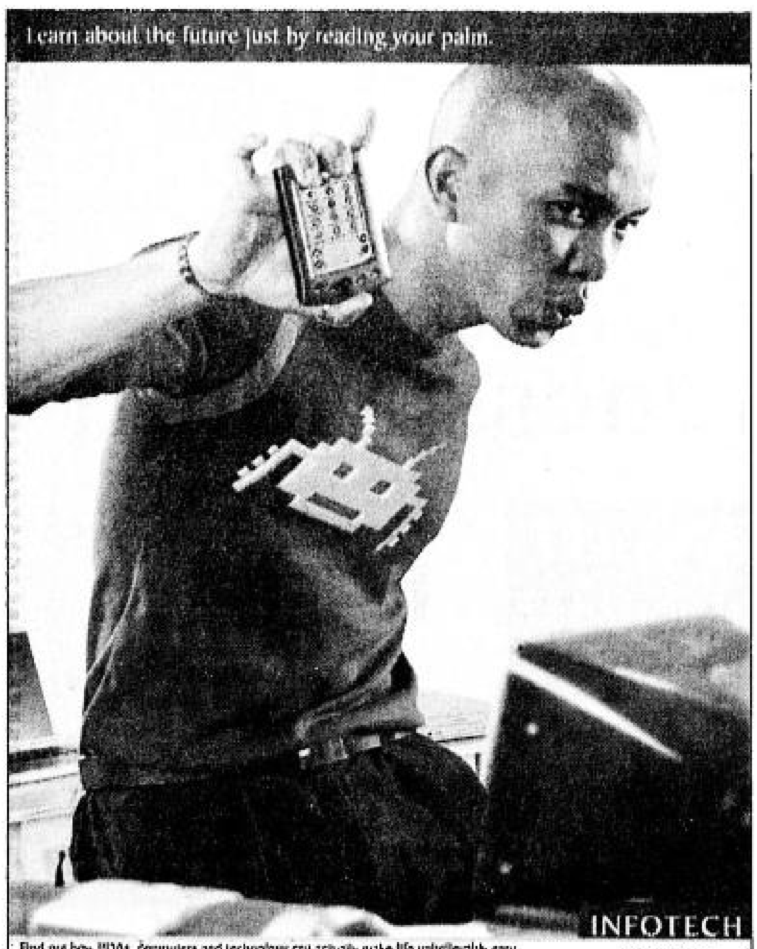

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Skipper of ill-fated ferry blames arson for tragedy

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE CAPTAIN of the MV Maria Carmela yesterday insisted that arson had started the fire that sank the ship but members of the special Marine Board of Inquiry found him to have also been negligent.

"The fire could not have happened without anyone (intentionally) starting it. We have been hauling copra for so long but nothing (like this has) happened," said Godofredo Erandio, who became the Carmela's captain in December 2001.

Erandio said that the ship's security officers did not inform him of any suspicious-looking persons on board the ship before it caught fire on the morning of April 11.

Only 45 bodies have been recovered out of the ship's 324 passengers, 81 of whom had not been listed in the passenger manifest.

Investigators have confirmed that the blaze had started at the ship's car deck where 1,600 sacks of copra had been stored but they could not determine as yet what had started the fire.

The eight-member board of inquiry grilled Erandio for two hours during a hearing yesterday at the Philippine Coast Guard headquarters.

Erandio's voice was very faint and sometimes chose not to answer. He was reminded twice to speak louder and to answer the questions.

"Maybe it's due to his traumatic experience. His mind must have 'stagnated,'" said Rear Admiral Domingo Estera, the board's chair.

Erandio said the fire did not start in the ship's engine room. He also denied that the ship's engine and the electrical generators in the engine room had malfunctioned.

He also said that the car deck had been well-guarded so that anyone found cooking or smoking in that area would have been stopped.

"There were also no smoking signs and (the security guards) would have scolded those who did smoke," Erandio said.

He said that he was informed about the fire at about 7:10 a.m. Some of the ship's crewmembers tried but failed to put it out. When the flames continued to spread, he ordered everyone to abandon ship at 7:40 a.m., Erandio said.

He said the crew helped the passengers into the life vests and to deploy the life rafts.

But while Erandio defended his actions and those of his men, members of the board of inquiry found that he had committed many lapses.

For one, he was not able to take with him the ship's logbook when he jumped off the ship.

Erandio said that he forgot to take the logbook because of the confusion.

"I will not absolve you from your job to take care of those documents. You should have even taken with you a map so that you would have known where the nearest island was," Estera said.

Capt. Gregorio Sialsa, the board's chief mariner, also pointed out that Erandio failed to mention in the ship's Master's Oath of Safe Departure that the ship was carrying a cargo of copra.

He said the manual of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code classifies copra as "highly dangerous goods." Erandio apparently also did not know this.

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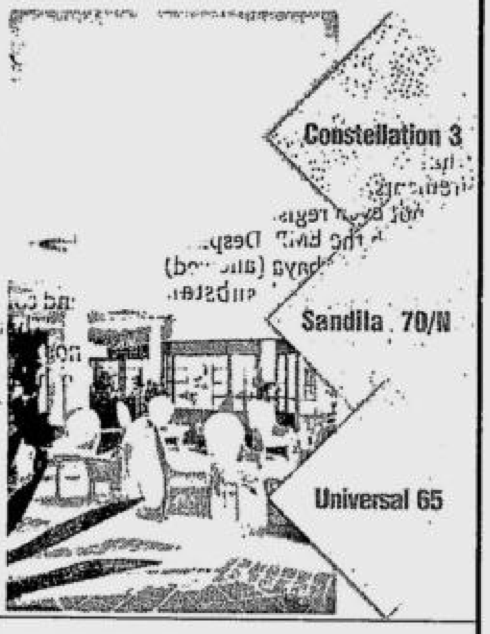

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Protecting the environment

EDITORIAL

EARTH DAY was observed yesterday, and the usual platitudes about the need to conserve and preserve the environment were uttered. But after all the rhetoric, what can we do and what will we do? In some places, people observe an Earth Week or even an Earth Month. Do we need to celebrate an Earth Year every year to remind ourselves of the need to take care of our environment?

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—In addition to air pollution, water pollution, increasing solid waste volume, traffic congestion, blighted slum areas and uncontrolled land use are some of environmental problems plaguing the urban areas.

—About 360 of the country's 419 rivers are polluted in varying degrees.

—Soil erosion is severely affecting the 77 provinces of the country.

—Coral reefs are being destroyed by illegal fishers.

—Potable water is becoming a scarce commodity.

We could go on and on, but we think the reader already has a general picture of the state of the Philippine environment.

What can be done to remedy the situation? One rule that has practically become an axiom with environmentalists is: Let the polluter pay. If the polluter cannot clean up the mess or undo the destruction he or it (if a corporation or organization) has created, then he or it must pay heavily in reparation. The government must have the political will to make polluters pay.

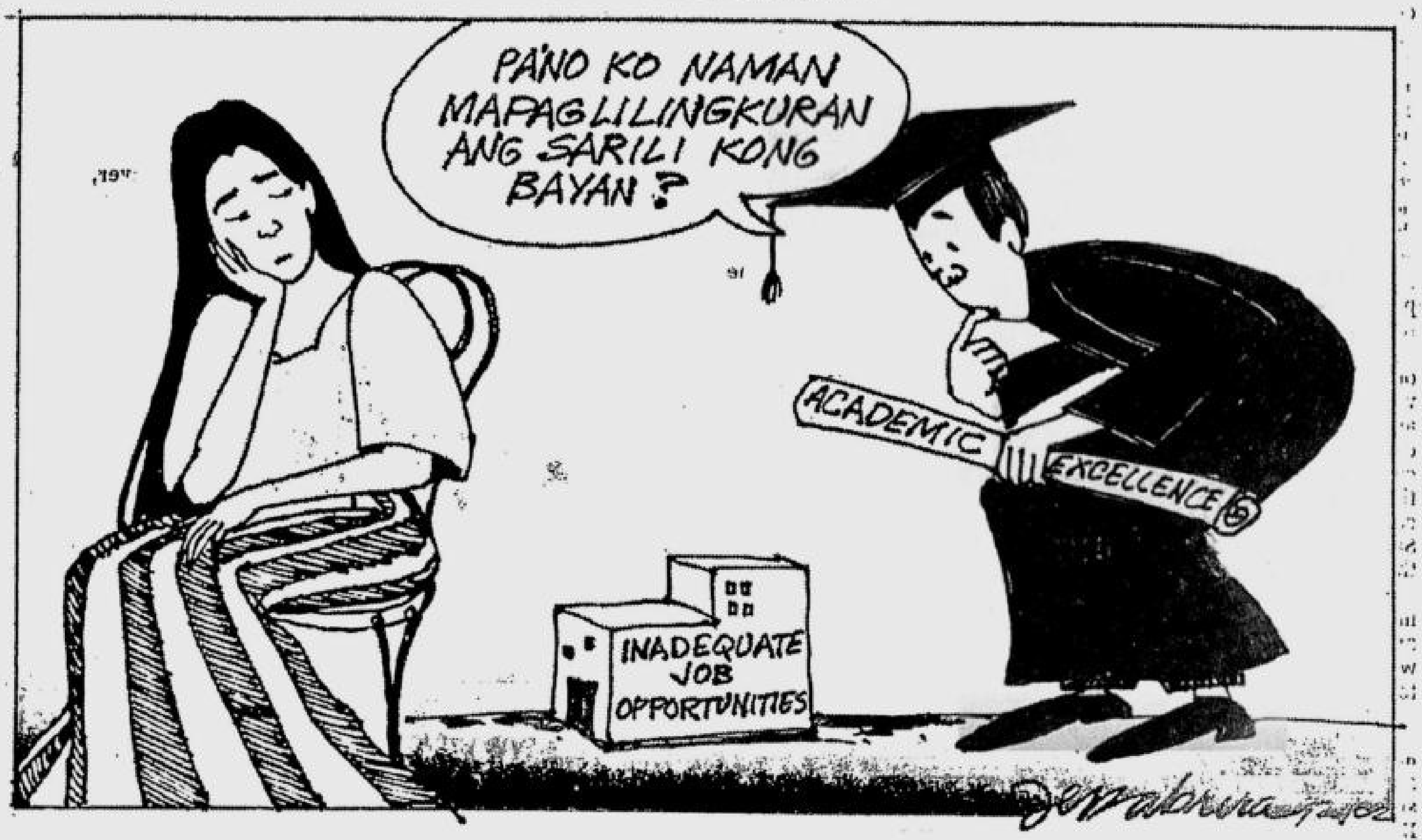
But beyond punishment and reparation, the business community has to develop a sense of social responsibility so that it will take the initiative in caring for the environment. This is not just a moral and social responsibility of business but also a responsibility to itself. Business should be reminded of what Stephen Viederman, president of the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, said: "We have never learned, or we have forgotten, that the environment is the basis for all life and for all production." Destroy the environment and you destroy all production and stop all business activity.

With globalization, however, poor countries (like the Philippines) are facing Hobson's choice: pollute or continue to be poor, said John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, co-authors of "A Future Perfect." Very often, protecting and conserving natural resources means foregoing jobs and economic opportunities. For instance, in the Philippines, the choice can sometimes be between allowing the operation of a cement factory or a chemical plant and employing hundreds of people or polluting the air or a waterway in the vicinity. And sometimes the polluter does not always pay for the pollution because the offender cannot be easily identified.

In the Philippines, environmental degradation and pollution are being caused mainly by rapid population growth, lack of master plans for land use, the effluents and discharges of industry and the over-exploitation of the natural resources. The problems could be remedied by strictly enforcing environmental laws and ordinances, such as the Anti-Smoke Belching Ordinance. Key programs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for water, air pollution abatement and other environmental problems could also improve the situation.

But ultimately, it is the people who can bring about a change in the situation of the environment. Pogo, the cartoon character, said: "We have met the enemy, and it is us." The same is true with pollution. We are our own worst enemies. We destroy our forests; we pollute the air with the discharge from our cars; we pollute the land, the seas, rivers and other waterways with our garbage.

The individual citizen, like the corporate citizen, should be reminded of his responsibility to protect and conserve the environment. Every person will have to realize that when he protects and conserves the environment, he is actually protecting all life, including himself. No living thing, whether plant or animal, is independent, as John. H. Storer, author of "The Web of Life," found in his field observation. Because all life is interrelated and interdependent, people must take care not to destroy themselves by destroying their environment.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Don't change the charter; we may get a worse one

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THERE is one very good reason why the Constitution should not changed or amended now: Our congressmen, who are pushing for the charter change, cannot be trusted. Even if the manner of changing it is through a constitutional convention, many of the delegates who will be elected are professional and habitual politicians—defeated candidates, relatives of incumbent congressmen, senators, governors and mayors—in short, all sorts of undesirable characters. If it is by constituent assembly, it would be much worse: Our Constitution would be at the mercy of the same greedy, grasping, opportunistic and selfish congressmen now shamelessly trying to fool the people into believing that cha-cha is the answer to all our problems.

There is nothing wrong with our Constitution; what is wrong are the officials tasked with enforcing it. What is needed is to change these people, not the Constitution. Even if our Constitution is not perfect (no constitution is) it is not necessary to monkey around with it now.

The most stable nations are those that respect their constitutions, faults and all. The richest, most developed country in the world, the only superpower left, the United States, has not changed its constitution since it became a nation. Its charter has been amended a few times, but it is still basically the same one drafted by its founding fathers. Some of its provisions, written during colonial times, are already obsolete, like the electoral college, but the Americans still respect them and make them work. We are unstable because we change our Constitution at the drop of a peso. Instead of solving our problems, we blame the Constitution. Instead of trying to make it work, we want to change it.

But the real reason congressmen want charter change is not to solve our problems but to solve their problems. They're going to change it to benefit themselves. The first thing they'll do is remove the term limits for themselves. Then they'll change our system of government from presidential to parliamentary because some of their ambitious leaders know they'll never be elected president of the nation. So they'll enter the highest office of the land through the backdoor; by being elected member of parliament first, then buying the position of prime minister with the people's money. Money will flow in parliament during the election of the prime minister.

In a unicameral parliament, it is the House of Representatives that will survive; the Senate will be abolished. The present Senate is nothing to be proud of, but can you imagine a legislature composed only of congressmen? God help us! The present Congress, with its two houses, we are already ashamed of, but a one-house parliament, to be composed mostly of the present congressmen (for they are the ones who would most likely be elected to it), would be infinitely worse. At least now, the Senate can somehow curb the abuses of the House, temper its greed, and correct some of its stupidity (though the Senate has its share of stupidity, like passing that stupid Lina Law without a quorum and without amendments), in a one-house parliament, there would be nobody to rein in the MPs. They would run amuck with the people's money.

A parliamentary system will never work for us because our congressmen are political butterflies. They fly from party to party, to whichever has the most money and the most material rewards for those who join.

The system works in other countries because their political parties have distinct ideologies that they fight for. And the legislators remain loyal to their parties. That is not the case here. Our political parties don't stand for anything. They have different names, but they are practically the same. And the politicians have no loyalty to their parties at all; they are loyal only to themselves. So they flit from one party to another, like so many butterflies and bees in a flower garden. Or so many vultures in a field full of rotting carcasses.

A federal system will not work here either. We have already seen how our local government officials abuse their powers, exacting onerous taxes from their constituents. We have seen how they abuse their powers by appropriating the people's money for their benefit; the first priority of most LGUs is to buy new vehicles for their governors, board members, mayors and councilors. We have seen how many barangay captains and *kagawads*, and councilors and mayors, encourage anarchy by coddling squatters because they mean votes. Imagine how much more abusive and opportunistic they would be in a federal system where they would be autonomous. Imagine how more widespread *jueteng* and other forms of gambling and prostitution would be in such an arrangement.

Federalists say it will end the secessionist movement in Mindanao and the NPA rebellion. I don't think so. More likely, leaders of the federal states will behave like feudal lords and, as in Medieval Europe and ancient Japan, wage wars among themselves. Just because a federal system works in the United States and other countries, it does not mean that it will work here, too. We have seen how municipal and provincial leaders with their private armies behaved like feudal lords. And closer to home, many of you are probably witnessing how officers of some homeowners' associations are behaving like tinhorn feudal lords exacting fees and obedience from their neighbors.

Our Constitution is still good. It was written by honest, well-intentioned people. Let's make it work. Let's not change it. Changing it will surely make it worse, considering the people who want to change it.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has said she is against it—although the legislators are twisting her arm to agree to a cha-cha. Let us help her resist the pressure. Let your congressmen know you are against it. Write letters to them. Make your voices heard. Speak out.

And don't be fooled by the congressmen.

The persistence of myth

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE were two very interesting items on our front page last Saturday.

On one side, a huge picture showed a crowd professing undying love for Joseph Estrada. The occasion was his 65th birthday, and the crowd, a motley group of entertainers, politicians and urban poor, went to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center to greet their favorite president happy birthday. Erap himself milked the occasion by saying this was the loneliest and happiest birthday of his life. Loneliest because it was the first time he was spending it behind bars, or its symbolic equivalent—an air-conditioned and well-stocked hospital room. Happiest because he continued to elicit an outpouring of loyalist support.

On the other side, our headline proclaimed that 76 percent of Filipinos supported the presence of US troops. The story came from an SWS survey that said 76 percent of 1,200 respondents approved of US troops in Basilan and 60 percent approved of their staying there for as long as necessary. Armed with this, and now completely oblivious, or contemptuous, of the constitutional limits on war games, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has approved the entry of more US personnel in the South. Most of them, quite significantly, are engineers, who will be building an airstrip and docking infrastructure there.

There and then, you see what's wrong with this country. There and then, you despair about the possibility of our ever going forward.

Seemingly those two items have nothing to do with each other. Seemingly, they deal with worlds that are as remote from each other as Legazpi, Albay, and Los Angeles, California, even though they both carry the initials "LA" But, in fact, those two items, or worlds, are as intricately linked to each other as bread and butter. They are mirror images.

The first item has drawn the usual derision from the intelligentsia. They ask: How can the *masa* be so idiotic as to believe in a former ruler who has so obviously failed them? Indeed, who has not only failed them but has harmed them deeply, making them poorer while feeding them the opium of false hope? How can anyone believe in a self-styled savior who applies himself only to saving face and saving what's left of a matinee-idol past?

Yet the same intelligentsia is silent about the second item. They are not just silent about it, they are part of the 76 percent who want US troops in this country and the 60 percent who want them to stay for as long as they want. They think it is the most natural thing in the world. They think it is the wisest thing in the world. They do **not** ask: How can anyone be so idiotic as to believe in former rulers who have obviously failed them? Indeed, who have not only failed them but have harmed them deeply, ripping them off throughout the course of their lives while feeding them the opium of a false friendship? How can anyone believe in a self-styled savior that applies itself only to saving its colonial privileges in this country and saving what's left of "special relations"?

The myth of Erap as savior of the Philippines and the myth of America as savior of the Philippines are identical in nearly every respect. It is well to reflect on that on this first anniversary of Erap's uprising.

Both were birthed by the world of make-believe. Erap by the movies, specifically by his roles as a toughie from the slums who conquers the world with his fists of stone and heart of gold. You mention "Asiong Salonga," "Erap" (from "*pare*," which means chum, or buddy), and even "Joseph Estrada" itself, which, lest we forget, is a screen name and not a real one, and a whole world is conjured, a world where wrongs are righted, where oppression is lifted, where hopes are fulfilled.

By a rewriting of history, the image of a thoroughly unjustified and brutal occupation fades in the background along with the sobs of the kin of the dead (a tenth of the population by some estimates) to be replaced by one of benign tutelage. You mention "Bataan," "Liberation," and indeed "America" which has ceased to be a place and turned into a vision of paradise, and a whole world is conjured, a world where a legendary *kumparehan* is forged, where two pals vow "*Walang iwanan*," where anti-Japanese, anti-Huk and anti-terrorists have become as interchangeable as McDonald's and Jollibee. Or June 12 and July 4.

Can anything be sillier than the notion that Erap is one of the poor and will rescue them from their greatest enemy, the greedy rich? But by the same token, can anything be sillier than the notion that George Bush is one with the Filipinos and will rescue us from our greatest enemy, the Abu Sayyaf? The threat of Erap's greedy rich is at least far more real than that of the terroristic Abu Sayyaf, even if the qualifications of the rescuer are not.

Can anyone still seriously believe the influx of more and more American personnel, who are now building ports and airstrips in the South, is still related in any way to the Abu Sayyaf? The Abu Sayyaf group should qualify for Guinness by now for sheer tenacity, for bringing the United States to a standstill on an island the size of several golf courses.

I do not know why we keep complaining about the *masa* being stupid and irrational, for refusing to look at the evidence instead of the charisma, when we ourselves insist on being so, and doing so. When we ourselves allow our brains to be addled by symbols and shibboleths, by myths and legends, and surrender to the fuzzy comfort that they bring.

Erap is the living symbol of our boundless capacity for monumental folly? Look farther afield, and think again.

Eugenia D. Apostol *Founding Chairman*

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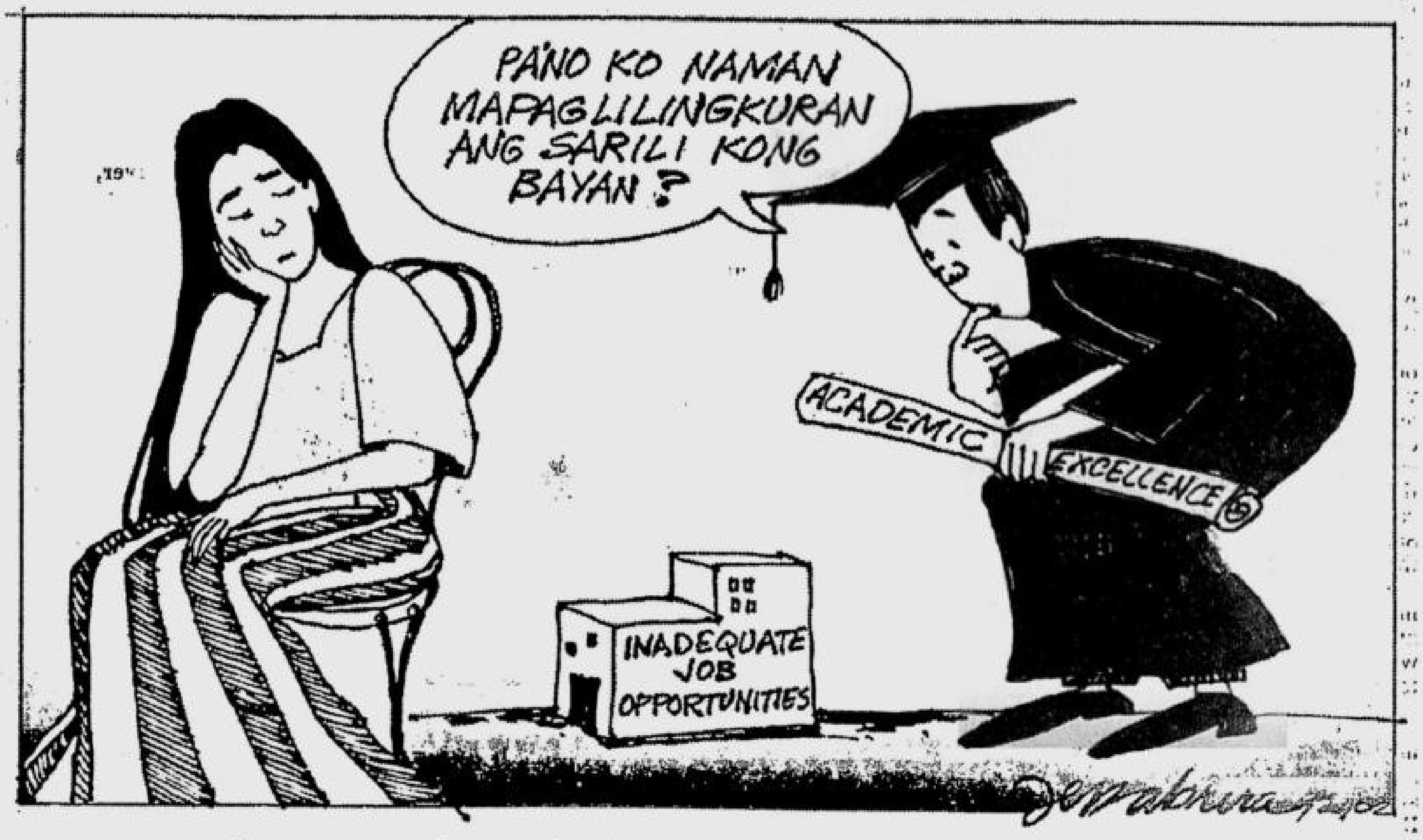
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—Potable water is becoming a scarce commodity.

We could go on and on, but we think the reader already has a general picture of the state of the Philippine environment.

What can be done to remedy the situation? One rule that has practically become an axiom with environmentalists is: Let the polluter pay. If the polluter cannot clean up the mess or undo the destruction he or it (if a corporation or organization) has created, then he or it must pay heavily in reparation. The government must have the political will to make polluters pay.

But beyond punishment and reparation, the business community has to develop a sense of social responsibility so that it will take the initiative in caring for the environment. This is not just a moral and social responsibility of business but also a responsibility to itself. Business should be reminded of what Stephen Viederman, president of the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, said: "We have never learned, or we have forgotten, that the environment is the basis for all life and for all production." Destroy the environment and you destroy all production and stop all business activity.

With globalization, however, poor countries (like the Philippines) are facing Hobson's choice: pollute or continue to be poor, said John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, co-authors of "A Future Perfect." Very often, protecting and conserving natural resources means foregoing jobs and economic opportunities. For instance, in the Philippines, the choice can sometimes be between allowing the operation of a cement factory or a chemical plant and employing hundreds of people or polluting the air or a waterway in the vicinity. And sometimes the polluter does not always pay for the pollution because the offender cannot be easily identified.

In the Philippines, environmental degradation and pollution are being caused mainly by rapid population growth, lack of master plans for land use, the effluents and discharges of industry and the over-exploitation of the natural resources. The problems could be remedied by strictly enforcing environmental laws and ordinances, such as the Anti-Smoke Belching Ordinance. Key programs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for water, air pollution abatement and other environmental problems could also improve the situation.

But ultimately, it is the people who can bring about a change in the situation of the environment. Pogo, the cartoon character, said: "We have met the enemy, and it is us." The same is true with pollution. We are our own worst enemies. We destroy our forests; we pollute the air with the discharge from our cars; we pollute the land, the seas, rivers and other waterways with our garbage.

The individual citizen, like the corporate citizen, should be reminded of his responsibility to protect and conserve the environment. Every person will have to realize that when he protects and conserves the environment, he is actually protecting all life, including himself. No living thing, whether plant or animal, is independent, as John. H. Storer, author of "The Web of Life," found in his field observation. Because all life is interrelated and interdependent, people must take care not to destroy themselves by destroying their environment.

Don't change the charter; we may get a worse one

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THERE is one very good reason why the Constitution should not changed or amended now: Our congressmen, who are pushing for the charter change, cannot be trusted. Even if the manner of changing it is through a constitutional convention, many of the delegates who will be elected are professional and habitual politicians—defeated candidates, relatives of incumbent congressmen, senators, governors and mayors—in short, all sorts of undesirable characters. If it is by constituent assembly, it would be much worse: Our Constitution would be at the mercy of the same greedy, grasping, opportunistic and selfish congressmen now shamelessly trying to fool the people into believing that cha-cha is the answer to all our problems.

There is nothing wrong with our Constitution; what is wrong are the officials tasked with enforcing it. What is needed is to change these people, not the Constitution. Even if our Constitution is not perfect (no constitution is) it is not necessary to monkey around with it now.

The most stable nations are those that respect their constitutions, faults and all. The richest, most developed country in the world, the only superpower left, the United States, has not changed its constitution since it became a nation. Its charter has been amended a few times, but it is still basically the same one drafted by its founding fathers. Some of its provisions, written during colonial times, are already obsolete, like the electoral college, but the Americans still respect them and make them work. We are unstable because we change our Constitution at the drop of a peso. Instead of solving our problems, we blame the Constitution. Instead of trying to make it work, we want to change it.

But the real reason congressmen want charter change is not to solve our problems but to solve their problems. They're going to change it to benefit themselves. The first thing they'll do is remove the term limits for themselves. Then they'll change our system of government from presidential to parliamentary because some of their ambitious leaders know they'll never be elected president of the nation. So they'll enter the highest office of the land through the backdoor; by being elected member of parliament first, then buying the position of prime minister with the people's money. Money will flow in parliament during the election of the prime minister.

In a unicameral parliament, it is the House of Representatives that will survive; the Senate will be abolished. The present Senate is nothing to be proud of, but can you imagine a legislature composed only of congressmen? God help us! The present Congress, with its two houses, we are already ashamed of, but a one-house parliament, to be composed mostly of the present congressmen (for they are the ones who would most likely be elected to it), would be infinitely worse. At least now, the Senate can somehow curb the abuses of the House, temper its greed, and correct some of its stupidity (though the Senate has its share of stupidity, like passing that stupid Lina Law without a quorum and without amendments), in a one-house parliament, there would be nobody to rein in the MPs. They would run amuck with the people's money.

A parliamentary system will never work for us because our congressmen are political butterflies. They fly from party to party, to whichever has the most money and the most material rewards for those who join.

The system works in other countries because their political parties have distinct ideologies that they fight for. And the legislators remain loyal to their parties. That is not the case here. Our political parties don't stand for anything. They have different names, but they are practically the same. And the politicians have no loyalty to their parties at all; they are loyal only to themselves. So they flit from one party to another, like so many butterflies and bees in a flower garden. Or so many vultures in a field full of rotting carcasses.

A federal system will not work here either. We have already seen how our local government officials abuse their powers, exacting onerous taxes from their constituents. We have seen how they abuse their powers by appropriating the people's money for their benefit; the first priority of most LGUs is to buy new vehicles for their governors, board members, mayors and councilors. We have seen how many barangay captains and *kagawads*, and councilors and mayors, encourage anarchy by coddling squatters because they mean votes. Imagine how much more abusive and opportunistic they would be in a federal system where they would be autonomous. Imagine how more widespread *jueteng* and other forms of gambling and prostitution would be in such an arrangement.

Federalists say it will end the secessionist movement in Mindanao and the NPA rebellion. I don't think so. More likely, leaders of the federal states will behave like feudal lords and, as in Medieval Europe and ancient Japan, wage wars among themselves. Just because a federal system works in the United States and other countries, it does not mean that it will work here, too. We have seen how municipal and provincial leaders with their private armies behaved like feudal lords. And closer to home, many of you are probably witnessing how officers of some homeowners' associations are behaving like tinhorn feudal lords exacting fees and obedience from their neighbors.

Our Constitution is still good. It was written by honest, well-intentioned people. Let's make it work. Let's not change it. Changing it will surely make it worse, considering the people who want to change it.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has said she is against it—although the legislators are twisting her arm to agree to a cha-cha. Let us help her resist the pressure. Let your congressmen know you are against it. Write letters to them. Make your voices heard. Speak out.

And don't be fooled by the congressmen.

The persistence of myth

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

THERE were two very interesting items on our front page last Saturday.

On one side, a huge picture showed a crowd professing undying love for Joseph Estrada. The occasion was his 65th birthday, and the crowd, a motley group of entertainers, politicians and urban poor, went to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center to greet their favorite president happy birthday. Erap himself milked the occasion by saying this was the loneliest and happiest birthday of his life. Loneliest because it was the first time he was spending it behind bars, or its symbolic equivalent—an air-conditioned and well-stocked hospital room. Happiest because he continued to elicit an outpouring of loyalist support.

On the other side, our headline proclaimed that 76 percent of Filipinos supported the presence of US troops. The story came from an SWS survey that said 76 percent of 1,200 respondents approved of US troops in Basilan and 60 percent approved of their staying there for as long as necessary. Armed with this, and now completely oblivious, or contemptuous, of the constitutional limits on war games, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has approved the entry of more US personnel in the South. Most of them, quite significantly, are engineers, who will be building an airstrip and docking infrastructure there.

There and then, you see what's wrong with this country. There and then, you despair about the possibility of our ever going forward.

Seemingly those two items have nothing to do with each other. Seemingly, they deal with worlds that are as remote from each other as Legazpi, Albay, and Los Angeles, California, even though they both carry the initials "LA" But, in fact, those two items, or worlds, are as intricately linked to each other as bread and butter. They are mirror images.

The first item has drawn the usual derision from the intelligentsia. They ask: How can the *masa* be so idiotic as to believe in a former ruler who has so obviously failed them? Indeed, who has not only failed them but has harmed them deeply, making them poorer while feeding them the opium of false hope? How can anyone believe in a self-styled savior who applies himself only to saving face and saving what's left of a matinee-idol past?

Yet the same intelligentsia is silent about the second item. They are not just silent about it, they are part of the 76 percent who want US troops in this country and the 60 percent who want them to stay for as long as they want. They think it is the most natural thing in the world. They think it is the wisest thing in the world. They do **not** ask: How can anyone be so idiotic as to believe in former rulers who have obviously failed them? Indeed, who have not only failed them but have harmed them deeply, ripping them off throughout the course of their lives while feeding them the opium of a false friendship? How can anyone believe in a self-styled savior that applies itself only to saving its colonial privileges in this country and saving what's left of "special relations"?

The myth of Erap as savior of the Philippines and the myth of America as savior of the Philippines are identical in nearly every respect. It is well to reflect on that on this first anniversary of Erap's uprising.

Both were birthed by the world of make-believe. Erap by the movies, specifically by his roles as a toughie from the slums who conquers the world with his fists of stone and heart of gold. You mention "Asiong Salonga," "Erap" (from *"pare,"* which means chum, or buddy), and even "Joseph Estrada" itself, which, lest we forget, is a screen name and not a real one, and a whole world is conjured, a world where wrongs are righted, where oppression is lifted, where hopes are fulfilled.

By a rewriting of history, the image of a thoroughly unjustified and brutal occupation fades in the background along with the sobs of the kin of the dead (a tenth of the population by some estimates) to be replaced by one of benign tutelage. You mention "Bataan," "Liberation," and indeed "America" which has ceased to be a place and turned into a vision of paradise, and a whole world is conjured, a world where a legendary *kumparehan* is forged, where two pals vow *"Walang iwanan,"* where anti-Japanese, anti-Huk and anti-terrorists have become as interchangeable as McDonald's and Jollibee. Or June 12 and July 4.

Can anything be sillier than the notion that Erap is one of the poor and will rescue them from their greatest enemy, the greedy rich? But by the same token, can anything be sillier than the notion that George Bush is one with the Filipinos and will rescue us from our greatest enemy, the Abu Sayyaf? The threat of Erap's greedy rich is at least far more real than that of the terroristic Abu Sayyaf, even if the qualifications of the rescuer are not.

Can anyone still seriously believe the influx of more and more American personnel, who are now building ports and airstrips in the South, is still related in any way to the Abu Sayyaf? The Abu Sayyaf group should qualify for Guinness by now for sheer tenacity, for bringing the United States to a standstill on an island the size of several golf courses.

I do not know why we keep complaining about the *masa* being stupid and irrational, for refusing to look at the evidence instead of the charisma, when we ourselves insist on being so and doing so. When we ourselves allow our brains to be addled by symbols and shibboleths, by myths and legends, and surrender to the fuzzy comfort that they bring.

Erap is the living symbol of our boundless capacity for monumental folly? Look farther afield, and think again.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Term limits among hottest issues in cha-cha

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN THE CURRENT national debate on charter change, I have been sounding out various politicians on their thinking. It seems that almost everyone I talk to is in favor of some amendment, varying only in the manner of how to go about it and which provisions to amend or introduce. For example, Cebu City Rep. Raul del Mar, who returned to his old seat after a "rest" of one term when his three-term limit expired, favors certain changes but believes that a constitutional convention is the best and most credible way to effect them. If the members of Congress were to convene themselves into a constituent assembly, Del Mar opines, then the people might find their input too self-serving and this could be grounds for rejection by the people in a plebiscite.

Southern Leyte Rep. Aniceto Saludo, on the other hand, feels that a new constitutional convention will be not only very expensive, there's also nothing it can do that a constituent assembly cannot do. Even if the election of delegates to a convention were to be held simultaneously with the 2004 elections, experts estimate it will still cost around P2 billion. *"Sayang ang pera,"* said Saludo, adding that the politicians would only get their relatives to run for convention seats.

Del Mar, however, believes there's more than money involved here, like the credibility of the amendment process. If members of Congress were to do the amending, their efforts are bound to be viewed as vested with self-interest.

* * *

With regard to the provisions needing amendment, Saludo feels that the term limits set in the 1987 Constitution ought to be lifted since it has failed to accomplish its purpose. He pointed out that once a lawmaker is unable to run, he lets his wife or son run in his place, but inevitably the caliber is not the same and the output of Congress suffers.

Doubtless this issue of term limits will be among the hottest issues to be debated in any group convened to amend the charter. Already some House members who are in the forefront of the charter change drive are being criticized because they also happen to be on their last term. I can see the point of my good friend Dong Saludo about the term limit having been largely a failure, but in a number of cases it has also ended the careers of some lawmakers without whom the country is better off. Without the term limits, we would have to suffer their presence until they reach senility.

* * *

Every Sunday evening at 9:15 p.m. over dzRH, this columnist co-hosts with Cecile Guidote Alvarez a program focusing on various public as well as private-sector efforts to alleviate poverty. The gems of concern and caring for the poor we have uncovered in this program are amazing.

Some weeks ago, we had as guests lawyer Rita Linda Jimeno, a 1985 UP graduate who is president of the United Way Philippines Inc.(UWP), and Annabelle "Bing" Ragsag, another UP graduate, who serves as its executive director. An affiliate of United Way International in the US, UWP has 15 chapters all over the country which are involved in various activities to help the poor. It is governed by a board of professionals, all serving on a volunteer basis.

The UWP's major activity is to conduct medical missions in calamity-stricken areas. As Jimeno put it, "*Pag pumutok ang bulkan, naroroon ang* UWP with its volunteer doctors and nurses, providing not only medical attention to the refugees, but also basic items such as mats, blankets, etc." In addition, the UWP also runs cooperatives in the depressed areas of Quezon City, and provides scholarships for poor but deserving students as well as starter loans for those in depressed areas who want to start their own businesses. One of UWP's most interesting projects is "Operation Make-A-Wish," conceptualized by a former UWP president and now board member, Dr. Erlinda G.L. Luna. This project, which aims to spread happiness and cheer, gives terminally ill young patients a dream-of-a-lifetime trip to DisneyWorld in Orlando, Florida, with their parents, in cooperation with US airlines and hotels.

* * *

Few would know, however, that the UWP spun off in 1968 from what used to be known as the Community Chest, which was doubtless among the first, if not the first, NGO here. It was founded in 1947 by the late businessman and civic leader Severino Luna, a native of San Carlos, Pangasinan. For many years that NGO was famous for its philanthropic activities. It's timely to recall Luna's work now since his wife, Josefa Sison Luna of Lingayen, died last week at the age of 90 and was just buried last Saturday.

Luna, who died at age 80 in the early 1990s, was also credited with founding Goodwill Industries, an NGO that takes care of the disabled by running stores that sell goods recycled and repaired by them, assuring them of income and work opportunities. Goodwill is now headed by my sister-in-law, Perlita Cunanan-Bengzon.

Luna was also involved with local autonomy and helped former Senators Maning Pelaez and Manny Manahan in the Barrio Charter. He also helped barrio lieutenants and municipal mayors organize their respective associations. I remember the bookstore chain he founded, called "Luna & Sons," as one of them was along the old Azcarraga Street, now Claro Recto Avenue, in Manila, not far from the school I went to for many years, the old Holy Ghost College on Mendiola. Interestingly, it was not any of Luna's children but his daughter-in-law Erlinda, wife of his son Severino Darby Luna Jr. and a family medicine practitioner, who has continued the elder Luna's philanthropic legacy.

Return to Sonya's

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT is perhaps one of the most romantic places in the country. In the March-April issue of Parents Magazine, Sonya's Garden figured prominently among the spots that celebrity interviewees judged as the best places to kindle the fires of love—or like.

I was particularly struck by the responses of a pair of TV hosts who both said, in much the same words, that they had visited Sonya's Garden to celebrate a special occasion with a loved one, hugging and kissing beneath the canopy of a bed in a strategic corner of the garden while waiting for dinner to be served. Of course, it was clear they were talking about each other!

What an irony, therefore, that Sonya's Garden began as one woman's retreat from the world, born out of her desire "to live by myself." How often does Sonya rue the fact that in choosing the solitary life, she embarked on an enterprise that now comprises a restaurant, a nursery and a furniture workshop?

"But this isn't a business," retorts Sonya, "it's a lifestyle!" If so, that lifestyle now includes playing godmother to budding romances that somehow blossom beneath the canopy of trees and amid the fragrance of her flowering plants.

Unfortunately for me, there was no room for romance during a recent visit, as the hubby and I were in the company of seven others, including our children. I had planned to bring my sister Chona, who was in town for a weekend visit before flying off to Cambodia, to Sonya's Garden for a taste of this "lifestyle." How fortunate, therefore, that before I could make the reservation, Sonya herself called to extend an invitation to take a look at a new annex, promising to give me a tour of her residence. Never one to scorn serendipity, I accepted the invite with alacrity.

* * *

"THE CONSERVATORY" is how Sonya calls her latest addition to the complex of structures that make up her most unusual and successful restaurant. In Europe, she explained, wealthy families who live in huge estates build a "summer conservatory," also known as a hothouse, to protect their plants in the winter. In this tropical country, Sonya's conservatory is a huge screened area, capable of seating more than a hundred diners. Half of the structure is devoted to a garden, rows upon rows of herbs and flower bushes, the air misted by constantly running showers.

Incongruously, the dining area is lit by chandeliers, some of them bought in flea markets and antique fairs in places as far away as Paris and Prague. Table settings bear Sonya's trademark "shabby chic" look: crisp white linens, mismatched porcelain, heavy white crockery, dainty crystal. Sonya says she is now able to host wedding receptions and other large affairs in The Conservatory, and I had quite a time imagining a wedding party amid the blooms and greenery.

* * *

A SHORT stroll down the path from the entrance to Sonya's Garden is her home, a small wooden structure that, from the outside, looks so flimsy one is afraid it could get blown down by a gust of wind.

The interiors appear just as delicate. Windows are framed by billowing tulle curtains, sofas draped with more white linen, the floor a gleaming smooth surface of weathered wood and whitewash.

The whole house is open-plan, including the kitchen. And air circulation is assured by cross-ventilation from huge screened windows that allow in plenty of wind and sunshine. But what if it rains? "I just curl up in bed and read," laughs Sonya, though she also has canvas awnings that can be lowered to keep the house safe from the elements.

Over by a corner of the yard, sits Sonya's little teahouse, a charming gazebo that overlooks the creek, where a canopied bed invites female visitors to play temptress to their male companions.

Sonya is now in the process of constructing a bed-and-breakfast on the property, with much the same ambience as her garden, restaurant and house. The prospect of a weekend stay is tempting. Waking up to birdsong, curling up beneath crisp fragrant linen, opening one's eyes to the dappled pattern of leaves silhouetted against the sunlight—the scenario fairly leaps straight out of a movie, or a commercial for coffee.

And in the dusk, it will be time for romance, strolling amid the wild profusion of Sonya's garden while breathing in the fragrance of lavender, ylang-ylang, rosemarie and roses. Just bring your partner, and make sure to leave the rest of the family behind!

* * *

"I CAN serve: A Network of People, Places and Services for the Philippine Breast Cancer Community" is being updated. "I Can Serve" was published in October 2000 as an easy reference for breast-cancer survivors and their families who wish to find out more about the disease, the options for treatment, as well as where and how to avail themselves of resources for counseling, care and special needs like wigs and prostheses.

Individuals or organizations, such as breast cancer support groups all over the country, groups providing hospice care, support groups for families and caregivers of cancer survivors and patients, or anyone offering any kind of service at a discount or for free to breast cancer survivors are invited to send in their contact numbers and addresses, as well as some information about themselves, for inclusion in the book. They may send their responses to icanserve@yahoo.com or PO Box 13107, Ortigas Center Post Office, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605 on or before May 15. Inclusion in "I Can Serve" is free, and the book is distributed for free by Bristol Myers.

Cultural concerns

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

WITH our officials too preoccupied with other matters ("Shall I or shall I not run for office in 2004?" "If I run, where do I source the funding?"), cultural concerns have been relegated to the bottom of the trash can. The National Museum had its budget slashed by 44 percent and the National Commission on Culture and the Arts has no access to its National Endowment Fund for cultural projects. The Cultural Center's budget is in the same fix.

A senator who later aspired to head a cultural agency once said that culture was only for the rich, while another senator said they (the lawmakers) had other priorities. *Okay lang*. Since it must have been our lawmakers who slashed these budgets, these priorities must take precedence to the point where no lawmaker involves himself with how the premier city, i.e., the capital of the country, looks like. You will note that whether the whole city is slathered in cement is of no concern to them. We stood in Arroceros Park (earmarked to be developed for dormitories) in the shade of narra and molave trees celebrating what may turn out to be the last celebration of Earth Day in that oasis and I told myself, "This country is mad."

In most other countries I've seen, presidential palaces are usually surrounded by high-end real estate, parks or other government buildings. There must be some kind of symbolism in that Malacañang is bounded on the one hand by a dead river and on the other by a deteriorated neighborhood since our officials never tire of telling us how poor we are and how bereft of funds to improve the quality of life of the general public. No one in power seems to understand that open spaces and parks improve quality of life, and so the mayor can, with impunity, mow down whatever trees are in the way of a pet project. Perhaps quality of life for them means the ability to go to Disneyland or shop at Fashion Island mall in Newport Beach.

In the meantime, life goes on in the rest of the world. The Swiss Federal Commission on Historic Monuments defines a monument to mean not only the building but "all that where historic value rests as a witness to the past." This would mean "open public places, alleyways, courts and plazas—the ensemble that together with the buildings constitutes a monument. Historic parks and gardens also form part of these monuments. In historic areas, one must always think beyond the isolated monument, starting with the immediate surroundings and moving toward the vaster historic complex, e.g., historic towns and archaeological sites."

Ambeth Ocampo and the National Historical Institute had better hurry and redefine their definition of monuments before the honorable archbishop of Batangas and the even more honorable mayor of Manila get vaster ideas. Suffice it to say the Jai-Alai Building was destroyed, not because there were funds to build a Hall of Justice which, from that empty sore spot on Taft Avenue, was not the case, but because it must have offended the righteous eyes of the mayor who saw it as a den of iniquity. What have Mehan Gardens and now the Arroceros Park done to offend the mayor? Why unoccupied and unutilized government buildings such as the GSIS complex behind City Hall are not put to good use as the City College or apartments for city employees is not explained. Surely there must be other properties that the city can repossess or other government structures, but no one in government appears to care two figs what happens to Manila.

As for my favorite archbishop dreaming of hamburgers and cash registers, in his defense let me state that a Jesuit mentor of his pointed out that no one in the private sector protesting the construction of that symbol of Western imperialism (I hate to think of a hamburger as such; perhaps a Manolo Blahnik instead?) has offered to help put his retirement home for priests. On the other hand, did the archbishop ask any of his parishioners for help toward this end? And if the "M" stands for the money the structure beside the Balayan Church will provide for his project, why does he need another anywhere else in the province? The church in this country being what it is, do not expect a possible future prince of the Church to answer us either.

Although nowadays little thought is placed by developers on the relationship of a structure to the topography and the physical environment, choice of site was once one of the most important considerations. These sites had meaning for our ancestors so that any present intervention can only build upon past meanings and changes while the new developer imposes his own—flawed as it may be.

We should make an effort to understand that conservation should in the end benefit the community, but only if we recognize that historic preservation embraces "local values, local knowledge, and the intangible aspects of heritage." In a material culture like ours, the grasp of the intangible (e.g., quality of life, the soul, the rustle of leaves, the rhythm of a poem) may turn out to be the most difficult part of all.

Breaking free

YOUNGBLOOD

Eunice

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

I ASKED my 14-year-old nephew if he missed his dad. He said no.

I was not surprised by his answer but still I probed, "Not at all?" He answered, "What is there to miss about him? Him calling me stupid?"

Tomorrow, it will be a week since my sister decided not to live with her husband anymore. They had been together for 16 years, and they have five kids, the youngest a 10-month-old baby girl.

My sister got pregnant at 18 and my parents, concerned about preserving the family honor, decided to marry her off to the man whom we didn't know to be her boyfriend until then. You see, he was living with us.

Maybe it was the yearning for a son that made my parents welcome him into our home. He was close to my parents even before he came to live with us, perhaps because in his own family, he was not really given much attention. When we moved into our new home in the city, he stayed more often in our house than he did in the boarding house he shared with his sisters. So, from his senior year in college, he became a permanent resident in our house, with a room of his own, even as my two older sisters shared a room and I slept with my grandmother.

I vividly remember the day when my sister, the eldest, told my parents that she was pregnant. I was eight years old then. My second sister's eyes were swollen from crying. It was so eerily quiet that you would think somebody had died. (Perhaps, in a way something did.)

Months later, my sister and the man whom my parents considered a son were married in the biggest church in the city, with my sister wearing a bridal gown that took weeks to embroider. Their reception was held in a newly opened hotel. My mother pulled out all the stops, perhaps in an attempt to mend her broken heart.

Two days before the wedding, my brother-in-law-to-be found my sister and our favorite cousin, a guy, lying side by side in bed, talking quietly. He dragged my sister out of the bedroom, demanding to know how could she lie beside another man when she was getting married in two days.

We brushed the outburst as a case of jealousy. We prevailed our cousin not to give up his part in the wedding entourage. And the marriage proceeded smoothly. Never did we think that that incident would be the first of many.

My parents decided that the newly married couple live with us since my sister was so very young.

Through the years, I saw my brother-in-law so drunk that he could hardly walk so many time. I saw him cower in fear when my father put a gun to his head after he accused my sister, in very crude terms, of sleeping with another man. There were times when I felt I must walk so softly fearing any noise could provoke another argument between them. Other times, I put pillows over my head so I wouldn't hear their shouting matches. I have been brought to the hospital after going numb with fear and fury.

I don't know how my sister coped with all of these. We lived in the same house but we never talked about it. It was a foregone conclusion that when my brother-in-law was drunk, there would be another violent episode. This became a way of life.

One night last month, my brother-in-law again came home drunk. After opening the gate to let him in, I went back to sleep half-expecting to hear the harsh words and the abuse he would heap on my sister.

He banged the door, waking up the baby and everybody else in the house. He began his monologue about how unfaithful his wife was. If I were to write the things he said, they would probably not be published. He did not care that his four sons, three of whom were teenagers, might hear him.

My sister had learned to ignore his drunken rantings, but this time the words were simply too much. The regular shouting match was on.

The difference this time was that their eldest son, now 16 years old, saw his dad land a right hook on his mother's face. It was the first time my brother-in-law ever laid a hand on my sister. Perhaps he got bolder because my parents were not home. A cousin who lived with us brought the kids to another house.

Every time I remember that episode, my heart breaks. My nephews and my niece, roused from their sleep by their drunken father, had been driven out of their home at three in the morning. Later, I realized the youngest boy, who was seven, didn't even have his slippers on.

Morning came and evening followed, but my sister and her husband were still together.

The last straw came last week. They were in a party. The Japanese husband of one of the guests bowed to my sister in keeping with his country's customs. My brother-in-law saw it differently; he thought it was another proof of my sister's infidelity. He proceeded to malign my sister in front of the other guests, and my sister couldn't do anything but run away.

She didn't come home that night to spare the kids from overhearing another bitter quarrel. She went home the next morning, just in time to drive the kids to school. And as soon as she was done, she went home, packed her things, got the baby and checked into a hotel.

The next day she called me to say she was leaving her husband.

She also called her in-laws, and they came to the house. She poured out 16 years of unhappiness and heartaches, and her husband took it all in with hardly any emotion.

Her in-laws acknowledged that it was all their brother's fault, but they made it clear that they wanted to save the marriage. They told my sister going to court would be a long process. I guess family honor was uppermost in their minds, too. Obviously, they hadn't lived with their brother for 16 years.

What I resented most was that they washed their hands of any responsibility for why their brother turned out that way, saying defensively it was our mother—yes, our mother who loved their brother like a son—had spoiled him. It didn't occur to them that perhaps the reason he turned to other people for affection was that he was not being loved enough. I didn't remember somebody blaming them for how their brother turned out, yet, they didn't hesitate to blame my mother.

They also pointed out that the marriage had lasted 16 years, and surely every moment of those 16 years could not have been as hellish as this.

Well, perhaps, they forgot that my sister and her kids didn't deserve even one moment of it. Maybe, it was my parents' fault that they took in somebody so unselfishly and loved him like he was their own son. Perhaps, my sister who had not done any harm to anybody in her entire life, brought it upon herself. Small minds.

It will be a week tomorrow. The relief we feel is so palpable we almost can catch it with our hands. I've asked one of my nephews how he would feel if other people said he came from broken family. "Other people have nothing to do with this," he replied.

My nephews understand better than what I give them credit for. As for my sister? I don't know what she's thinking or how she feels. I haven't asked her. For me it's enough to know that she did it for her kids. Finally, she found a reason to break free.

Eunice, 24, used a pseudonym to spare her sister from being asked questions she may not be ready to answer yet.

Life without electricity

FIRST of all, I would like to thank the INQUIRER for its feature on the purchased power adjustment ("What can be done to lower the PPA?" in Talk of the Town last April 14). As a consumer who is honestly paying his electric bills, it really made things a lot clearer.

I started paying for our family's electric bills soon after I graduated in 1999. It was a condition set by my parents before I bought a personal computer. Since there are six of us in our family, it was the least I could do to ease the burden of paying for our mounting expenses.

Back then, our bills averaged about P650 a month, an amount that wasn't too hard to pay for a guy who was earning P10,033 monthly. But when I saw our electric bill several days ago, it was P1,111.80—about 70 percent higher than it was just three years ago.

I would have understood if this were the result of increased electric consumption. But what gets my goat is that the increase comes from something else.

To be perfectly honest, before I read your feature, I knew nothing about the PPA when I started paying for it three years ago. Back then, it was roughly half of our total electric bill. I first started to learn what it was during the last senatorial elections through those advertisements of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

If I read the articles of Maitet Diokno-Pascual and Louie Corral correctly, even if we were to drastically reduce our electric consumption, I would still be paying three times our electric consumption every month. So, the lower my electric consumption, the higher the PPA goes in relation to the basic charge. That looks like a nice piece of work for corporate capitalism.

Meralco is also asking for a raise in the basic charge. It's quite ingenious of Meralco to time its lobbying for an increase with the start of the summer season, when consumers have no choice but to use more electricity to beat off the heat. Judging from what happened to the Omnibus Power Bill, I wouldn't be surprised if Meralco's petition would eventually find favor in the legislature, notwithstanding the findings of the government's inter-agency committee on those IPP contacts. After all, with all the money they've been raking in from the PPA, there should be plenty of grease to pass around.

What's the Filipino consumer to do? Why, what we've been generally doing every time we've been held up by corporate interests: grin and bear it.

It's either that or we learn to live like our ancestors a couple of centuries ago, without a computer, TV, air-conditioner and electric fan. We can use old-fashioned wax candles and abaca fans, with nothing but the sound of our raw voices and guitars to keep us entertained. Indeed, we may not even have to adjust so much, considering all the power blackouts we've been experiencing yearly. Maybe we might even learn to appreciate musical talents like Levi Celerio and Lucio San Pedro once more. And people will eventually stop voting TV personalities into public office. And we'll be spared from watching another Ina ng Bayan advertisement.

Life without electricity might not be so bad after all.

**—CHRISTOPHER ARO,
UP Diliman,
Quezon City**

Ombudsman and PCGG must start winning

IN 1986, shortly after Ferdinand Marcos and his family fled to Hawaii, the Presidential Commission on Good Government was established to recover, sequester and confiscate their ill-gotten wealth. Sixteen long years have passed and still no significant wealth has been recovered to justify the PCGG's reason for being. What the PCGG got were a few assets like aircraft, paintings and resorts which cannot feed our starving countrymen, send students to school, or pay our mounting debts,

What is even more disappointing now is the legal setback suffered by the government because of the PCGG's gross negligence or its Swiss lawyer Martin Kurer's incompetence. Swiss Magistrate Dieter Jann lifted the freeze on Marcos' cronies accounts due to "procedural intricacies" only. The PCGG's failure to present sufficient evidence that the unfrozen Swiss bank accounts of Geronimo Velasco, Carmencito de Borja Clavecilla, Fe Roa, Ignacio Jimenez and Alfredo ``Bejo" Romualdez are ill-gotten wealth cost the government $17 billion in losses.

The PCGG did not do its job since the accounts had been frozen for 16 years. Yet it accuses the Office of the Ombudsman for losing the battle and the dismissal of other criminal and civil cases filed against the Marcoses and their cronies.

While it must share the burden of responsibility and accountability with the Office of the Ombudsman, the PCGG must also clean up its own mess and find the missing vital documents that could convict the Marcoses and their cohorts. Betrayal of public trust has become the issue.

We cannot afford to suffer another legal setback. We committed a great blunder by allowing the Marcoses to go on exile in February 1986. The situation has become pathetic, if not hopeless, not only because we're not able to incarcerate the Marcoses and their cronies, but also because we are not able to recover our wealth. The PCGG, together with the Office of the Ombudsman, must do its job and do it right as soon as possible before the cronies get their loot. The public interest must be served.

**—ABSTRACT S. LAYUG, Ipil
Residence Hall, UP Diliman,
Quezon City**

Ten cops against a jeepney driver

PARDON my ignorance, but is there any new program for giving our new police officials practical training? I ask because I saw a group of policemen (wearing chocolate brown uniforms) in one "*hulihan*" incident on Commonwealth Avenue. While apprehensions for traffic violations are not unusual, the incident was too barbaric and unpleasant.

The driver, believing himself innocent of a traffic violation, apparently refused to pull over and surrender his license. This angered the policemen, and about 10 of them closed in on the jeepney driver brandishing nightsticks. One of them got on the jeepney and sat beside the driver, causing the passengers to get off in panic.

I may not be in a position to question the ways of our law enforcers, but is there any other way to apprehend violators without being too inhuman and brutal?

If this is the way our policemen are trained, it's not surprising that our law enforcement system has become "*bulok*."

**—MA. CHERYL C. ESTEBAN,
Miriam College, Quezon City**

PHILIPPINE
LETTERS
INQUIRER

Due to a misplaced parking ticket

THIS is in response to the news article written by your reporter Alcuin Papa, titled "Chavit Singson's daughter chased over parking fee," last April 14, 2002.

It was an ordinary case of a misplaced parking ticket. The police blotter noted it as a mere data entry. I was therefore appalled when I came across the news report early Sunday morning that showed how far so little can be stretched to make up for a lack of legitimate news.

Normal procedures were followed that day. Proper identification was presented to the security guards supported by not just one but two certified registration papers covering my car, which the reporter said I failed to produce.

The vehicle's papers and the deed of sale were sufficient to convince the security personnel at the car park that it was indeed my car. The reporter, however, misled the readers into concluding that there was a carnapping involved. He also hinted that I was not willing to pay the parking fee, which in fact I did.

The reporter said he based his report on the police blotter, but this shows exactly the opposite of what he wrote. The blotter confirms that I indeed paid the fee for a lost parking ticket and shows in detail the information found on my registration papers.

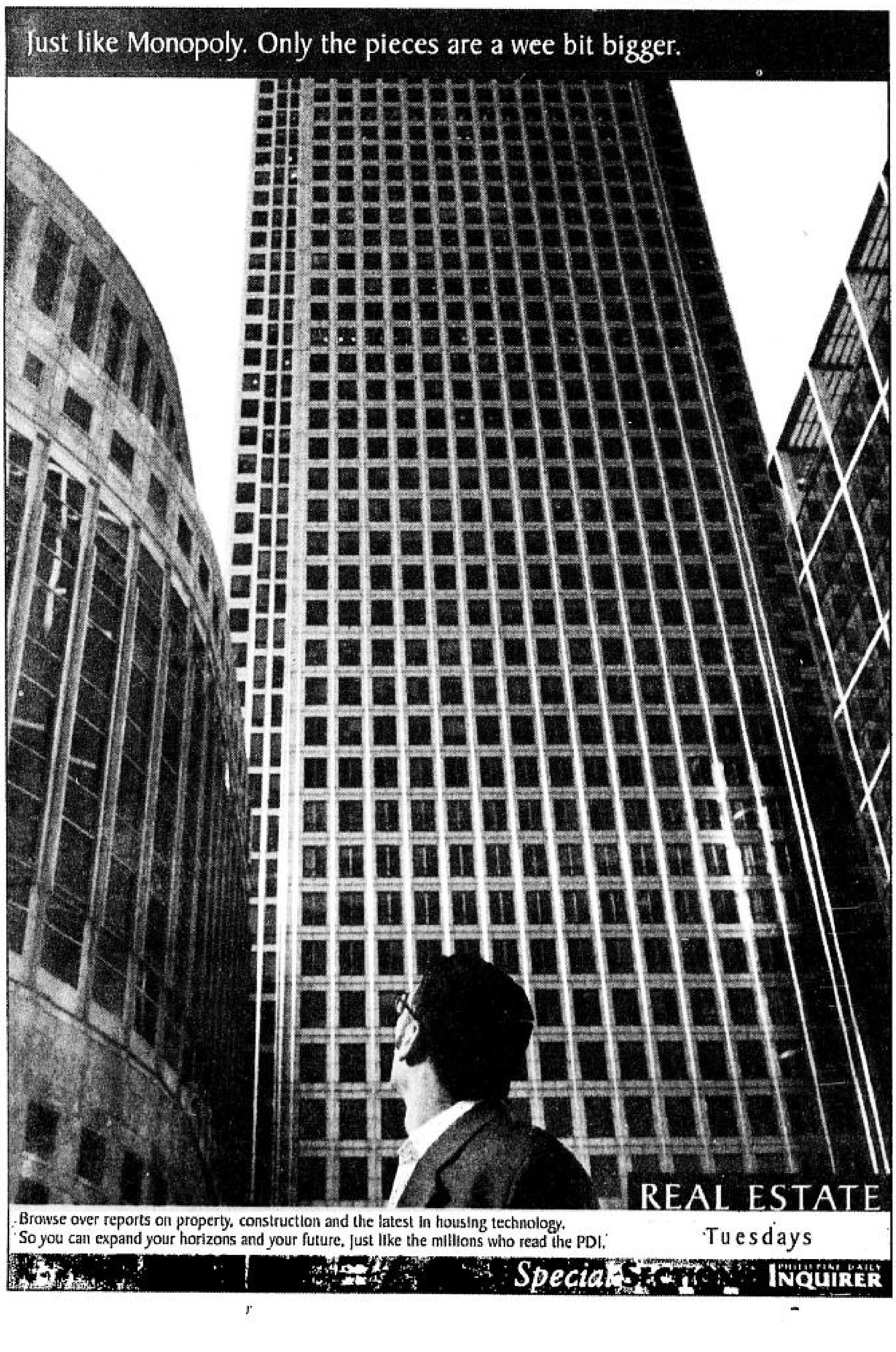
To sensationalize the story, the reporter fabricated an "interview" with the guard, Norberto Selmo, and said that I had almost run over a guard. But Selmo says he never made such a statement and was as surprised as I was by what appeared in the story.

Lastly, the article reports that the incident happened at the Dela Rosa Carpark-2. We never went there. We parked at the Amorsolo Carpark.

**—RICHELLE LOUISE A.
SINGSON, LCS Building, San
Andres Bukid, Manila**

THE STATEMENT of the guard that he was almost hit by the vehicle was made to members of the Makati City police whom I interviewed.

According to police reports, the chase did occur. I based my story on Makati police reports and interviews. **—ALCUIN PAPA**



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No need to move Bonifacio monument

AS a conservationist myself, I support Sen. Blas Ople's contention that the proposal to relocate the Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan is not worth considering. There are a number of ways of preserving historic landmarks without resorting to such drastic actions as moving it from its original site.

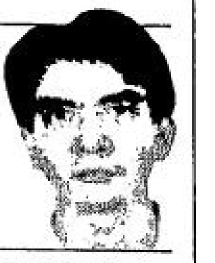
One way of preserving the historical and cultural significance of the Bonifacio Monument is to move the MRT line about 100 meters away from the rotunda. Instead of the planned elevated footbridge that will obstruct the view, the project proponent can build underpasses that will integrate the MRT-3 station into the existing LRT 1 Monumento Station. In addition, the city government should improve the area around the monument.

We cannot simply ignore the benefits to be derived by the commuting public from the MRT line extension project. The project is an integral part of the Transport Master Plan for Metropolitan Manila, and one of the top priority projects of the Macapagal administration. The bottom line is: developers and conservationists can meet halfway.

**—RAUL D.
VERCELES, 1391-D
Corregidor St.,
Guadalupe Nuevo,
Makati City**

Reading, texting

PINOY KASI



Michael Tan

SOME time in February, I wrote about a young couple and their infant son from an urban poor community. I had interviewed them about their child's vaccinations and found he had not received several important shots.

This was at a time when all the newspapers were talking about new polio cases in the Philippines accompanied by appeals from the Department of Health to have children vaccinated. No, the couple had not read the news.

With time, I've come to realize the young couple—the male's 19 and the female's 18—does not read, period. Bear with me as I give a few more details.

Over the last few months, I continued to be in touch with the couple, cajoling them about the vaccinations but they never ran out of excuses. The first time I interviewed them, they complained that the vaccines were expensive. As I became closer to them, I asked how they could spend P300 a week on cellphone cards and yet find vaccinations expensive.

Then I found the health center, a 10-minute walk away from where they lived, where they could get the vaccines for free. That only produced more excuses: we're too busy, it's too hot, etc. The child finally got one polio vaccine, but only because the DOH had sent teams around the communities, going door to door.

Two weeks ago, the baby came down with measles. They texted me about the sick kid, bombarding me with all kinds of questions about measles, the answers to which were all in reading materials I had left them back in January. Did you read them? I asked. The male said that was his partner's responsibility, but she said she was too busy. Sure. But she was certainly quite up-to-date with the latest telenovela episodes and Tagalog romance novels, stories of Prince Charmings who come to rescue and marry damsels in distress so they can have lots of kids and live happily ever after, never having to worry about vaccinations.

That was a very long introduction to show the links between our non-functional literacy and our dismal health situation. The parents of the kid were born and raised in Manila, attending one of Quezon City's public high schools, but they might as well have been illiterate. Both hardly use their reading skills, except for the romance novels and for texting.

Is it surprising that we have newscasters who stumble and stutter as they read the news? Or that our technicians operate and repair machines by trial and error, even if manuals are available? Or that we have parents who can't parent, despite all the books, newspapers and magazines dishing out information on child rearing?

Contrast our situation with what's happening in neighboring countries. Recently I visited the Shanghai Book City, a seven-story bookstore (I estimated nearly half a hectare of floor space) which was packed with people of all ages, all classes, browsing and buying. They had books on every topic imaginable, including a large selection of health guides. There was also a mind-boggling variety of books translated into Chinese from other languages, from esoteric stuff like the work of the French philosopher-historian Michel Foucault to medical books to pop psychology self-help books like "Who Moved the Cheese?"

I must say these huge "book cities" are actually more of an exception. You find small bookstores everywhere, including many which sell only children's books. Most importantly, the books are affordable, many available for less than P100 each. No wonder you find even market vendors reading as they wait for customers.

I showed some of the translated books to one of my graduate classes, and a Japanese student told me it's the same way in his country—they translate everything. Now we can see why the Japanese didn't have to learn English to develop their technology: they were still able to capture Western knowledge through translated books.

It's World Book Day today. The British celebrated early, right before the Easter holidays, by giving out £1 tokens to all schoolchildren, who could then exchange them for books. In South Africa, children in four of the poorest states will each receive a packet of books to encourage them to read.

I know we have our own Children's Book Month and the Museo Pambata is doing fine work to encourage reading among our children, but our government needs to do more as well to support school and municipal libraries and to launch reading campaigns. I wouldn't mind if they pushed through with this proposed tax on texting if the revenues are specifically earmarked to support the production of good and affordable reading materials.

We're always boasting about being the global texting capital, and how our kids are the fastest texters in the world. Other countries know better—their kids have cell phones too but texting doesn't dominate their lives the way it does here. Their priority is to raise highly literate kids. Guess who's going to produce the next generation of cellphones, and who ends up merely as consumers of those phones?

* * *

I've been flooded with requests for references on *bangungot*, following the last article I did. I'm going to wait one more week and then do a mass mailing to all who requested the citations. So all you *bangungot* fans, please be patient. You'll get your copy.

* * *

Comments at miguel@pinoykasi.net

PNP-CIDG knows society matron's whereabouts

WE write to clarify certain statements contained in the articles written by Christian V. Esguerra last April 15 and 16, 2002.

We have been engaged by Marybeth Lopez de Leon to represent her in the ongoing investigation in connection with the death of Belma Abella.

It is not true that Marybeth de Leon, the wife of Jose Vicente M. de Leon, is at large or that no one has coordinated with the police in regard to the investigation. No warrant has been issued against our client. She has not fled and she is not in hiding. We are cooperating, consistent with our client's constitutional rights, with the PNP-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) which has been apprised of her whereabouts. We understand that the CIDG has coordinated with the Las Piñas police.

Our client will face and defend herself against any charge that may be filed against her. Upon our advice, however, she will not issue any statement without our counsel. We will wait for our copy of any complaint that may be filed against her and she will respond appropriately.

We understand that PNP-Las Piñas has already endorsed the case to the city prosecutor.

**—ALEXANDER J. POBLADOR,
JAIME G. HOFILEÑA, Poblador
Bautista and Reyes Law
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Evidence mounts US may have had hand in Venezuela coup

WASHINGTON—Evidence continues to mount that the United States may have had a hand in the coup that briefly toppled Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, although Washington continued to insist Sunday that it played no role.

A week of US denials was capped off by comments Sunday by Secretary of State Colin Powell, who reiterated US assertions that Washington was not involved in the April 12 civilian-military overthrow of the democratically elected Chavez.

"I know of no basis for a report that we were trying to get (Chavez) out," said Powell, speaking Sunday on ABC's "This Week" program.

"We support democracy, we support the community of democracy that exists in our hemisphere," Powell said.

President George W. Bush on Thursday said his government told the coup plotters "that we support democracy and did not support any extra-constitutional action."

Chavez, an ex-paratrooper, was ousted early April 12 following three days of upheaval that included a nationwide joint labor-management strike.

The US State Department issued a communiqué that day, decrying "undemocratic actions committed or encouraged by the Chavez administration" that "provoked" the crisis.

But less than 48 hours later, the interim government of businessman Pedro Carmona buckled under intense pressure from other Latin American nations for dissolving Venezuela's National Assembly and Supreme Court, and Chavez was back in power after his supporters took to the streets.

Far from trying to unseat Chavez, Powell said Sunday the United States is interested in constitutional rule in the region.

"Clearly we had disagreements with President Chavez in the past and we may well have them in the future. But what we are interested in is the constitutional process, and it was followed and we are supporting it," he said.

Despite those disavowals, Washington was sympathetic toward the short-lived Carmona presidency, according to a letter by a Venezuelan diplomat published Sunday in the paper Ultimas Noticias.

In the letter, Venezuelan charge d'affaires in Washington Luis Herrera Marcano wrote that on the morning of April 12—after Chavez's ouster but before Carmona was sworn in—the embassy received a call from Phillip Chicola, the state department's point man on Venezuela, saying that Washington "understands and sympathizes" with changes in the country.

Marcano wrote that Chicola told him that Washington also believed it was necessary for the National Assembly to ratify Chavez's resignation and for the Venezuelan Supreme Court to give "its stamp of approval."

In the months before the coup, several dissatisfied Venezuelans visited Washington for closed-door talks with US officials—and investigators at the US Senate believe that Bush officials did not forcefully squelch coup plans despite ample warning, Newsweek magazine reported in its Monday issue.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee plans to look into what role Bush officials may have played in the aborted coup, the magazine said.

Newsweek wrote that among those suspected of financing the plot is Gustavo Cisneros, a Venezuelan media tycoon and fishing companion of former President George Bush. Cisneros has denied any role. *AFP*

KOIZUMI bowing to guests at the start of a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new premier's official residence in Tokyo April 22. AFP

Japan seeks to mend ties with Asia after Koizumi shrine visit

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, under fire from China and South Korea for visiting a shrine where war criminals are among those honored, said on Monday that Tokyo would do its best to boost friendly ties with both Beijing and Japan's World Cup cohosts in Seoul.

Koizumi made the surprise visit on Sunday in an apparent effort to limit diplomatic fallout by avoiding the Aug. 15 anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War Two—an emotive date for nations that suffered under Tokyo's military aggression.

"Japan will make further efforts to boost friendly ties with South Korea and China," Koizumi was quoted by Kyodo news agency as telling reporters. "I believe the two countries will understand Japan's intention to do so."

Koizumi, whose popularity has been plunging in opinion polls, set off a diplomatic and domestic furor last year when he paid homage at Yasukuni Shrine two days before the anniversary date.

He said on Sunday that his latest visit to the shine was intended as a prayer for peace, but it elicited swift—if perhaps proforma—criticism from both Beijing and Seoul.

China's foreign minister summoned the Japanese ambassador in Beijing on Sunday to lodge a protest, and on Monday Seoul took similar action.

"Basically, our thinking is that we cannot understand the Japanese prime minister's visit to Yasukuni," a South Korean foreign ministry spokesperson said.

"Everybody's surprised and disappointed." But the ministry said the South Korean government planned no further action.

Speculation had been rife that Koizumi would put off or even skip a visit to the shrine this year to avoid angering China and South Korea ahead of the May 31-June 30 World Cup soccer tournament and the September anniversary of the 1972 establishment of diplomatic ties with Beijing.

But with his popularity slipping due to a spate of scandals in his party and doubts about his own leadership, Koizumi was probably reluctant to offend advocates of visits to Yasukuni.

Japan's top government spokesperson, Yasuo Fukuda, said Tokyo would explain the visit to South Korea and China if need be, but added there were no plans to do so at present.

"This year there will be various events to commemorate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic ties, and Japan and South Korea are cohosting the World Cup soccer tournament, so I believe that friendly ties and understanding between Japan and the two countries will deepen," Fukuda told a news conference.

Some analysts said Koizumi might have been given a tacit nod for the visit by Chinese officials when he went to the southern Chinese island of Hainan for an Asian leaders forum this month.

He may also have judged that the cohosting of the World Cup would prevent a serious chilling of ties with South Korea. *Reuters*

Left wrests control in Hungary election

BUDAPEST—Hungary's center-left opposition secured a narrow victory in Sunday's general election, vowing to guide the former communist country along a sure path to European Union membership.

In a close-run election, the Socialist/Free Democrat alliance won 198 seats in Hungary's 386-seat Parliament, toppling the center-right bloc led by Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Orban's Fidesz/Democratic Forum alliance, rallying strongly from a first round defeat two weeks ago, won 188 seats, after a high voter turnout of 71 percent in Sunday's runoff vote.

"Let us congratulate the winners, let us bow our heads to the will of the voters," Orban told thousands of supporters at Budapest's Millennium Park.

Orban, a 38-year-old former anti-Communist student activist, gambled all with a dramatic lurch to the nationalist right in a bid to shore up support through a divisive and bitter campaign.

At Socialist Party headquarters in Pest's Republic Square, the Socialist campaign leader who is expected to be the next prime minister, Peter Medgyessy, told jubilant supporters: "We won."

MEDGYESSY

"The main issue has been decided, and that's a change of government. This high turnout, given the close contest, gives a big legitimacy to our new government," the 59-year-old former banker said, vowing to reunite the country.

"I am determined to be prime minister of 10 million . . . There are 10 million important people in Hungary, regardless of who they voted for," Medgyessy told supporters gathered in the square, the scene of bloody clashes in Hungary's failed 1956 anti-Soviet revolt.

The Socialists, formed from the reformist wing of the disintegrating ruling Communists in 1989, have promised market-friendly economic policies, scrapping capital gains tax and selling off state assets.

Ruling in coalition with the Free Democrats in 1994-98, the Socialists introduced an austerity package that brought Hungary's economy back on track for growth. *Reuters*

No IVF for gay women planned

CANBERRA—Australia will seek to ban single women and lesbians from having children by in-vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment, a federal government spokesperson said Monday.

The move follows last week's landmark decision by Australia's High Court which rejected a bid by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to prevent single and lesbian women from having access to IVF treatment.

An earlier attempt by the Conservative coalition to amend the federal sex discrimination legislation stalled in the upper house Senate.

Labor and the Democrats have signaled this time will be no different.

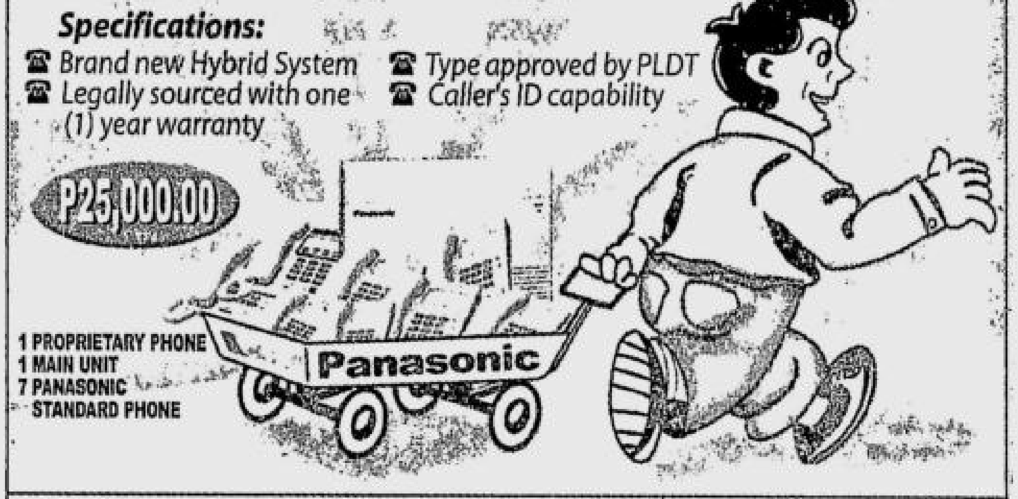
The Cabinet has also decided government MPs will not be allowed a conscience vote on the legislation.

Labor and the Democrats have already said they will oppose any plans to water down the Sex Discrimination Act.

Prime Minister John Howard said last week he believed every child should be nurtured by a mother and father.

He wants the states to be able to block single women and lesbians accessing IVF treatment.

Leesa Meldrum, who has spent 10 years fighting for access to IVF, had declared the court ruling a victory for all Australian women. *AFP*



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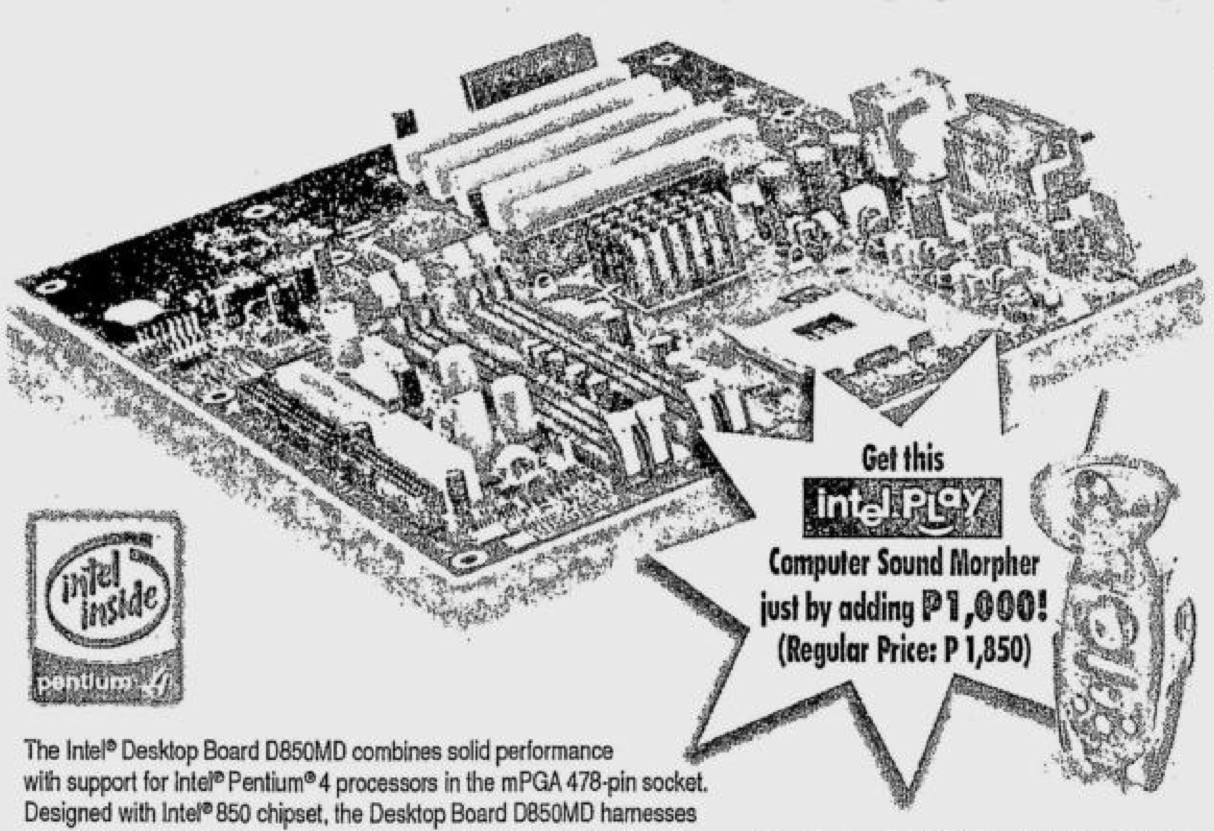

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Welcome the New Life

April 23-25, 2002. Prudentialakbay has come back to Boracay. This time, not only to witness the annual gathering of the top sales people of the company, but also to see the dawn of a revitalized organization committed to helping Filipino families live the Good Life.

With a vibrant spirit of the same vision born 23 years ago and under a new leadership, this year's Prudentialakbay honors the company's Sales Olympians.

The setting is Boracay---where the sun never sets, the waves never stop and the water is always clear. To many, Boracay is an island paradise, but for Prudentialife, it is a place where the new life begins.

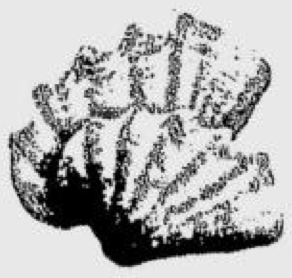
A Festival of Food and Fun

Boracay is perfect for Prudentialifers. Where they can have fun strolling on the white sands. Its crystal-clear blue waters, inhabited by colorful fishes, reflects the majestic blue sky during daytime where they can also go snorkeling, scuba diving, hiking, playing beach volleyball and more. At night, torches illuminate the shoreline while a feast of seafood and native fruits await the Prudentialifers.

Indeed, Prudentialakbay is a time for fun and excitement. There is no planholder or service to think or worry about for a day.

Making Waves: This Year's Awardees

Spotlight is on the hard-driven sales people of Prudentialife. After being treated like kings and queens for days of fun and frolic, the Sales Olympians will be honored in the Gabi ng Parangal. Garbed in their best, they stand proud before everyone. This is one night when hard work is recognized and their energy re-fueled. This is their one big moment of glory.



And The New Life Begins

Jose Alberto T. Alba
President, Prudentialife Group

Beyond its initiatives for tourism, Prudentialife adheres to its mission of continually bringing the Good Life to the Filipinos. This positive energy will be felt resulting from the Prudentialakbay in Boracay and will give life to the new corporate thrusts of Prudentialife as a customer-driven organization. As its new president said, *"Our primary focus is to help everyone to earn a decent living; offer good financial service products ensuring the Good Life in the future of every Filipino family."*

Prudentialakbay Comes Back To Boracay

Once a year, the top sales people of Prudentialife are being honored in what has become a tradition of excellence known as Prudentialakbay. More than an annual sales convention, Prudentialakbay is also a celebration of triumph of hard work where the top achievers in Sales and Marketing are being treated like royalty for a week after working like a horse to qualify for this great event.

Yet this year's Prudentialakbay is going to be more meaningful than past celebrations as it marks the beginning of a new chapter in the company's colorful history.

The backdrop to this new episode is the paradise island of Boracay. Back here for the third time, Prudentialakbay 2002 will be all play and no work. Except for the Welcome Party on the first day and the Gabi ng Parangal as finale, the whole Boracay experience is pure relaxation.

The Prudentialakbay Race

Every year, Prudentialife rewards its hardworking sales people with an all-expense-paid celebration. As a senior officer said, *"This is their moment. This is the big event for them. It is the time when the company shows them how valuable they are."*

Moreover, Prudentialakbay is more than a sales race. It is a time to foster camaraderie, inspire the employees and recognize the salespeople for a job well done.

The Prudentialakbay Trail

More than a venue to honor sales people, Prudentialakbay is also an opportunity for Prudentialife to support domestic tourism.

In fact, even before the campaign for local tourism took off, Prudentialakbay has already been to key tourist destinations, sometimes going back to a place more than once. Just like it has in Boracay.

Instilling the Culture of Tourism

This year, Prudentialife renews its commitment to the country's tourism thrusts by again showcasing the country's premiere haven by the beach---BORACAY, one of the top 10 beach destinations in

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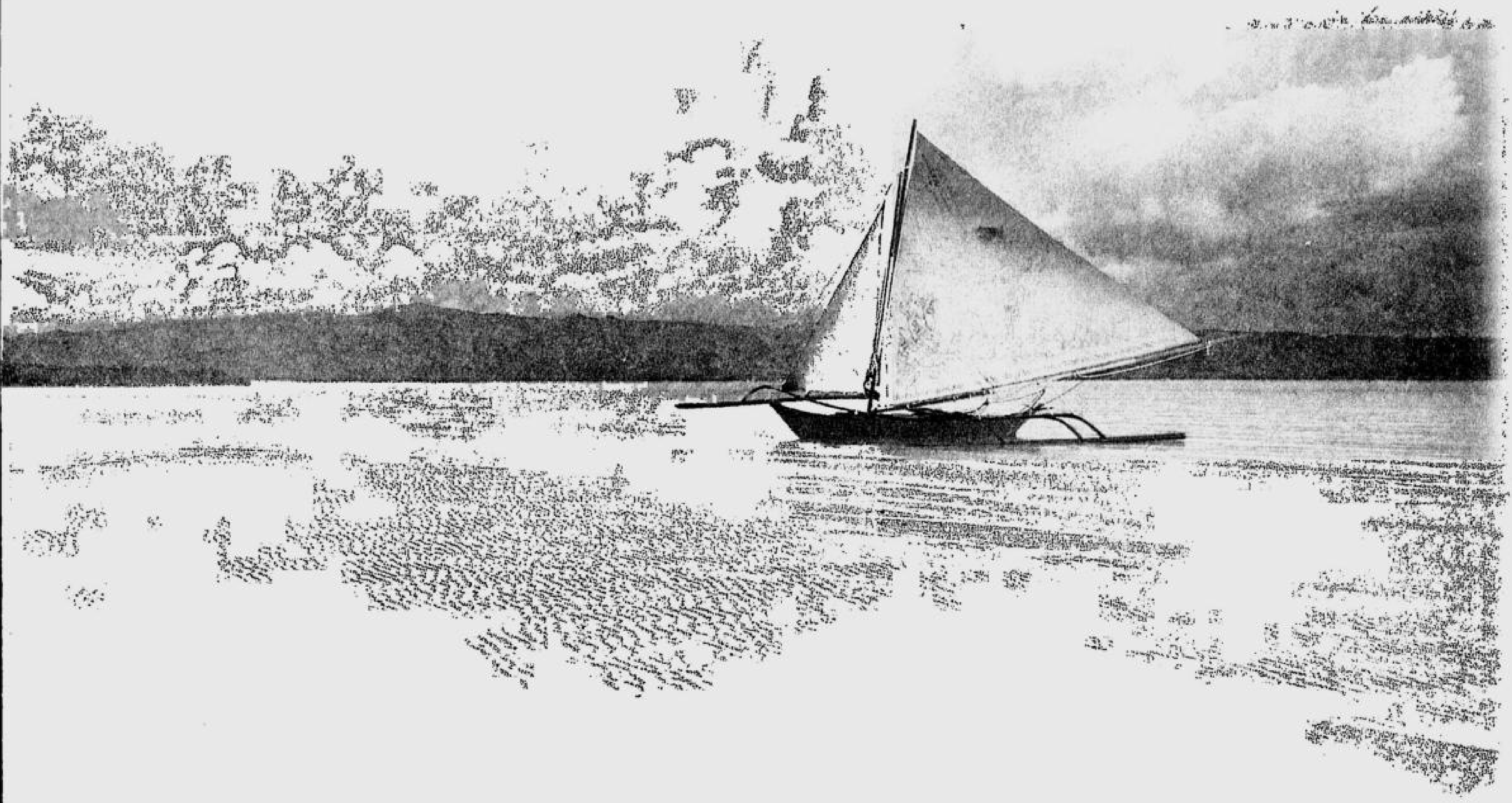

National Sales Olympics Champions 2001

Top 3 Area Managers

• Oscar J. Gonzalez, Jr. • Marilyn R. Cueto• Priscilla M. Palad

Top 5 Agency Managers/ Sales Executives/ Managers

• Ma. Fe A. Bustos • Lolita P. del Carmen • Mariano G. Burog • Elsie D. Dondoyano • Catalina M. Gunay

Top 5 Group Managers/Associate Sales Executives/Associate Sales Managers

• Ma. Katherine I. Nubla • Carmen B. Valenzuela • Ma. Fe A. Lagdameo • Thelma R. Torres

Top Sales Counselors/ Sales Solicitors/Sales Advisors

• Emmanuel R. dela Cruz • Ma. Isabel G. Antonino • Judith P. Tan • Darius S. Dizon • Regina T. Vidal • Rosemarie S. de Guzman • Bonifacio C. Cruz • Ma. Carmen T. Villacorte • Danilo Q. Lim • Beth M. Calibara

Area Managers Consistency Awardees

Diana T. Agco • Porfirio V. Cabasisi • Eleazar O. Cucio • Marilyn R. Cueto • Yolanda E. David • Rosalinda Z. Dichoso • Rodolfo R. Guevarra • Adelma T. Pasion • Lourdes A. Sagsagat • Julita C. Yjares

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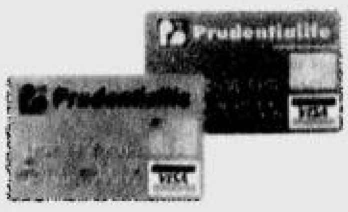
- *2000 - Davao*
- *1999 - Cebu*
- *1998 - Subic*
- *1997 - Baguio*
- *1996 - Cebu*
- *1995 - Boracay*
- *1994 - Subic*
- *1993-Puerto Azul /Pagsanjan /Manila Hotel*
- *1992 - Fort Ilocandia, La Union*
- *1991 - Boracay*
- *1990 - Bacolod*
- *1989 - Cebu*

the world. An appropriate move since the Department of Tourism has just launched the WOW PHILIPPINES CAMPAIGN recently.

For 13 years now, Prudentialakbay has been a significant income-generator to the cities chosen as venue. These places also get the media mileage from the advertising Prudentialakbay produces for the event. That's, of course, aside from acquainting its participants to the beauty of our cities and provinces, prompting them to know their own culture and heritage.

Value-Packed Holiday-In-A-Box Tours

To further boost tourism, Prudentialife Travel Services, Inc., the official travel agency of Prudentialakbay, has designed the Holiday-In-A-Box tour packages to help promote the Philippines as "Wealth of Wonders." Created to address the concerns of travelers about value deals and convenient, affordable vacation packages, the HIB makes your dream destination more accessible by pre-paying it or using credit cards such as Prudentialife Visa Card. Interested travelers may call 897-8158 or 897-8315 or may log on to www.prudentialife.com/ptsi or www.eazy-travel.com.



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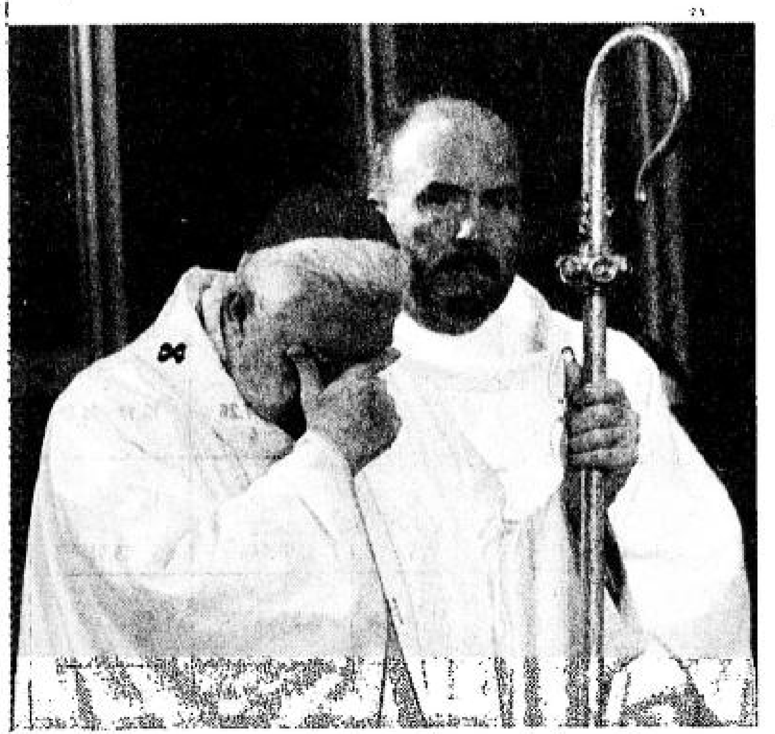
No more sexual abuse sins, US Catholics urge



CARDINAL Bernard Law (law) rubs his eyes during a Mass as an acolyte stands by at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, April 21. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—Leaders of the US Roman Catholic Church on Sunday insisted that the sins of sexual abuse committed by clergy members must not be repeated, just days ahead of a landmark meeting at the Vatican between Pope John Paul II and the Church's 13 US cardinals.

"This is a wake-up call for the Church," said Cardinal Bernard Law, Boston's archbishop, opening Sunday Mass at Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

"I wish that I could turn the clock back and undo the harm and hurt that have been caused to children, to families and others," said Law, who has come under the most sustained fire in the Church scandal for reassigning offending priests rather than defrocking them.

More than 400 complaints have been lodged against priests in Law's archdiocese alone, and many in his flock have clamored for him to step down, although he insists he has no intention of doing so.

"However challenging these days are for all of us, I firmly believe that God has given us an opportunity to make positive and significant changes for the future," he said.

Sexual abuse "is a very serious issue undermining the mission of the Church," he declared, vowing: "As long as I am in a position to do so, I will work tirelessly to address this crisis and to underscore its severity."

Accusations of child molestation by clergy members have been made in at least 17 US dioceses—including Boston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco—sparking a firestorm of criticism and mistrust from the nation's 64 million Catholics.

The cardinals are to seek the 81-year-old Pontiff's guidance at the two-day meeting on changes he would like to see implemented before a June conference of bishops in Dallas, Texas.

For the Reverend Richard Neuhaus, president of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, "the issue is fidelity, fidelity, fidelity."

"To put it very simply . . . if the bishops and priests had been living according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, and had been faithful to their own sacred vows, there would be no scandal; we wouldn't be discussing this right now," Neuhaus told ABC television's "This Week" program.

"We need to admit our mistakes; we need to ask for forgiveness," Bishop William Skylstad, vice president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, told ABC.

"Certainly the Holy Father in the Jubilee Year has set the tone for the request of forgiveness. And this is a unique moment of grace."

Going forward, Skylstad said, the Church must try to regain its credibility and "see not only how we can repair that breach of trust but also how we can look to the future and strengthen it."

He said recovering from the scandal is a "gradual process," noting that the Church must continue screening seminary applicants stringently and must make children a priority.

"So much of our ministry in the Church is addressed to children, and we must make sure that we minister to them in a very safe, responsible way," he said.

"The focus must be on the safety of children!" Bishop Wilton Gregory, president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, agreed in an interview with Newsweek to be published Monday.

Meanwhile, Washington's archbishop, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, said he hopes a national zero-tolerance policy for pedophiliac priests will emerge from the Vatican meeting. *AFP*

Peace prize shouldn't have been given Peres, Nobel panel members say

OSLO, Norway—For a peace prize, the Nobel sure can generate fury.

The committee that awards the century-old prize has a tradition of never second-guessing itself in public. Now it is engulfed in controversy because some of its five members are saying the 1994 prize shouldn't have gone to Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

To the anger of Israel's supporters, the dissenters didn't extend their criticism to Peres' co-laureate, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Arafat shared the prize with Peres and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for the peace efforts, now collapsed, that included the 1993 Oslo Agreement negotiated in the Norwegian capital. Rabin was assassinated in 1995 by an ultra-nationalist Israeli who opposed his peace moves.

The 1994 prize, worth a shared $933,000, was controversial in Norway from the outset, with committee member Kaare Kristiansen quitting rather than condone a prize to Arafat, a man he branded a "terrorist."

Now, with Israelis and Palestinians again killing each other, emotions are back on the boil.

The trigger was committee member Hanna Kvanmo, a retired left-wing politician, who broke with the tradition of silence in early April.

Replying to a newspaper's questions, she said she wished Peres' prize could be revoked because as a member of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's coalition government, he was party to the Israeli military offensive.

"If it had been now, he would not have gotten the prize," Kvanmo said.

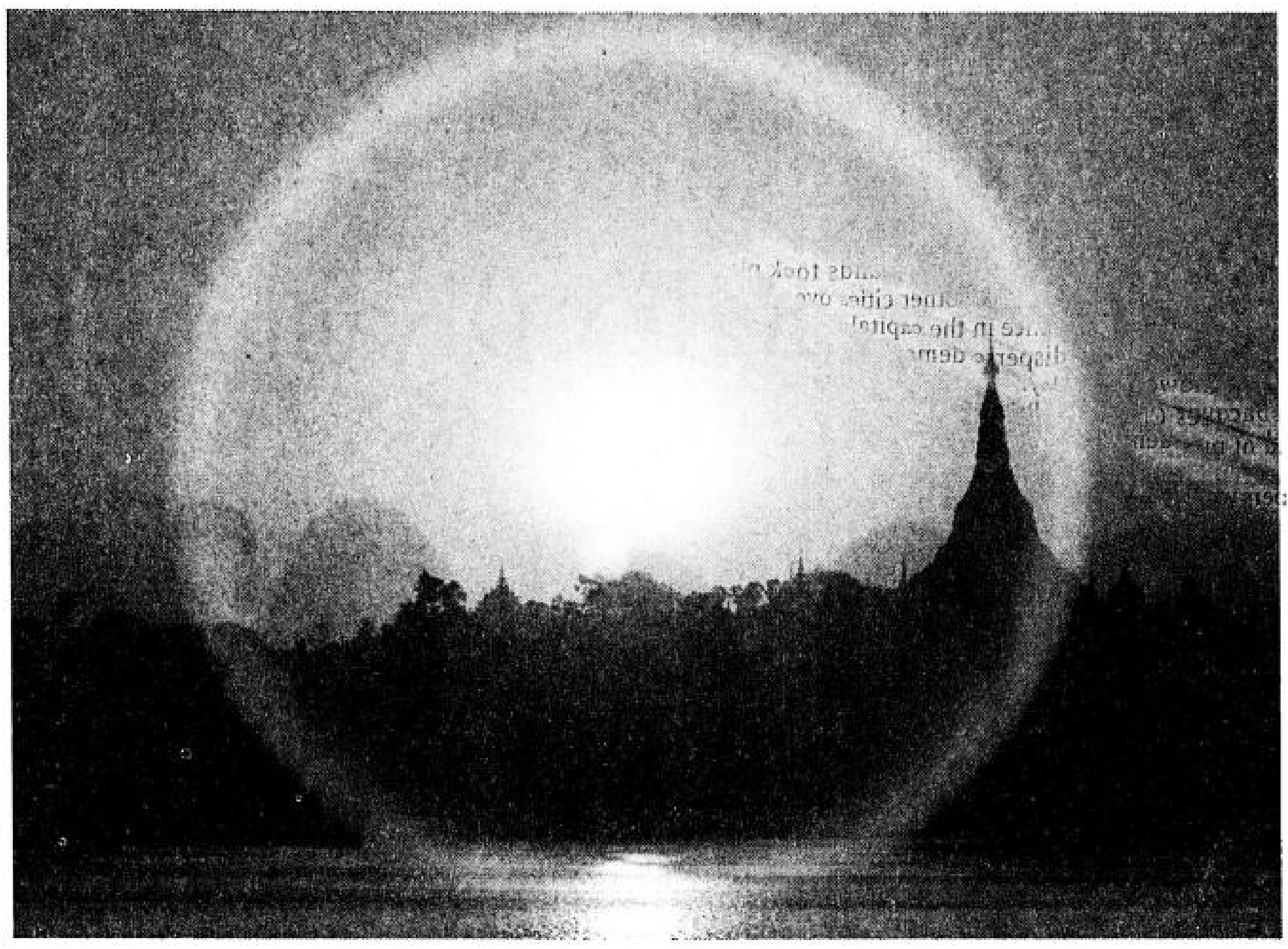
Another member, Lutheran Bishop Gunnar Staalsett, said Peres was violating the "intention and spirit" of the prize.

Committee chair Gunnar Berge criticized the current Israeli government, but said "I am completely sure the situation would have been different if Shimon Peres had been Israel's prime minister."

Another committee member, Sissel Roenbeck, held the current Israeli government largely responsible, and urged Peres to return to a policy of peace and dialogue.

And Arafat? Kvanmo didn't think he had forfeited his prize because, she said, he had tried to carry out the Oslo accords and couldn't be blamed for the violence since Israel had him under virtual arrest.

Israel maintains that Arafat has orchestrated the violence that began long before it besieged his West Bank headquarters, and its supporters were quick to protest over the committee members' remarks. *AP*



BURMA HOLY TEMPLE The sun sets in the horizon behind the Shwedagon temple as hyperfocal lens flare circles around the massive stupa dominating Rangoon's skyline April 8. For Burmese Buddhists, Shwedagon is the most sacred of all Buddhist sites in the country, one which all Burmese hope to visit at least once. AFP

Court hears challenges to Musharraf referendum

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday began hearing three petitions to decide whether plans by President Pervez Musharraf to hold a referendum to extend his term of office are unconstitutional.

The complainants are the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy of opposition political parties, the country's main fundamentalist religious party, the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), and the Supreme Court Bar Association.

JI lawyer Farooq Hassan, in his opening remarks, told the court its ruling would change the fate of Pakistan.

"The referendum called by Gen. Pervez Musharraf is unconstitutional, without any legal authority. This case will decide the fate of the nation," he said.

"Musharraf is violating the Constitution blatantly."

The case, being heard by a full nine-member bench of the country's highest court, comes only eight days before the referendum is due to be held on April 30.

Musharraf, who seized power in a military coup in 1999 and proclaimed himself president last year, has said he wants the mandate of the people to remain in the post for five years.

Banners and posters of the general have been strung up at strategic places and the state media runs lengthy advertisements and stories about Musharraf's campaign rallies. *AFP*

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7 killed in new Hindu-Muslim riots

AHMEDABAD, India—Renewed fighting between Hindus and Muslims killed at least seven people, including a policeman, in this western Indian city on Sunday, police said.

The deaths in Ahmedabad follow a series of riots in Gujarat state, where at least 839 people have been killed since a Muslim mob attacked a train carrying Hindu pilgrims on Feb. 27, leading to reprisals and rioting by Hindus. Ahmedabad is the commercial capital of Gujarat.

Rioting mobs of Hindus and Muslims hacked the policeman to death and burned eight shops in the city's Gomtipur district, said R.J. Savani, deputy commissioner of police. Four others were killed when police opened fire to disperse the crowd, which had also set a man on fire as he drove by on his scooter. The man later died in hospital from burn injuries, police said.

In Bapunagar, another city district, police shot and killed one person and injured 24. The injured were hospitalized along with eight burn victims, Savani said.

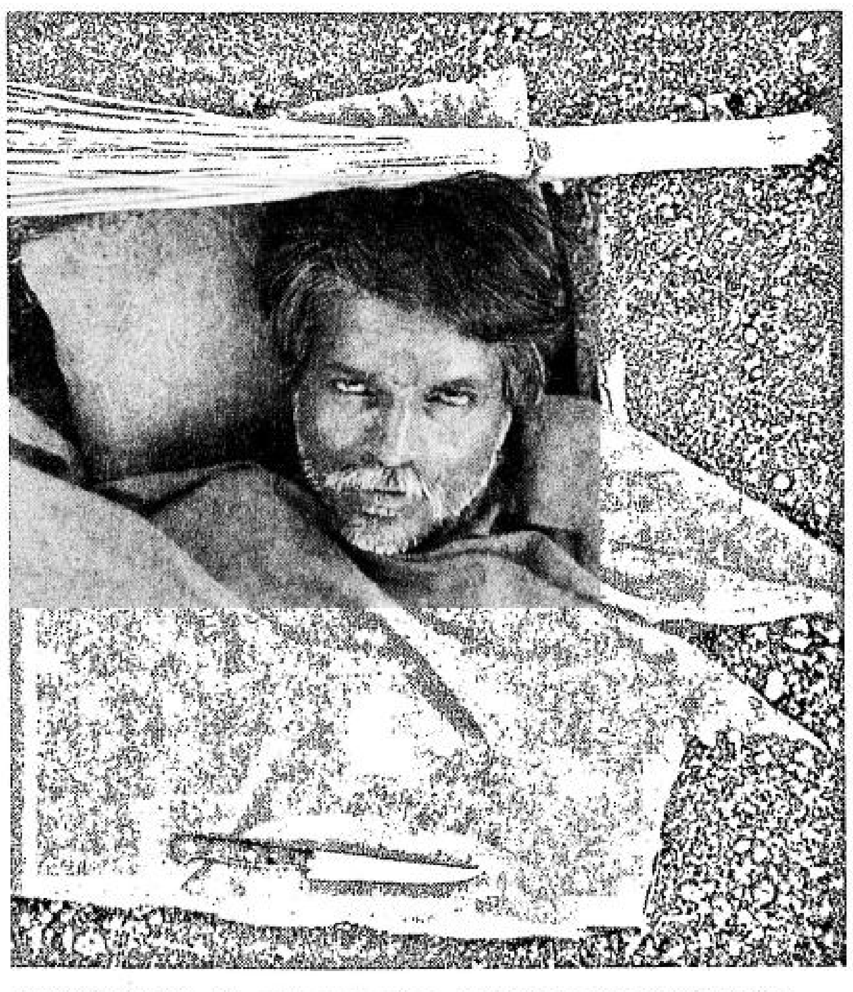
Authorities imposed curfews in Gomtipur, Bapunagar and Rakhial districts on Sunday.

Fresh violence also erupted in Kadhi, a village in Gujarat, as Hindu and Muslim mobs ransacked and burned 14 homes and four shops, said Arun Kumar Sharma, superintendent of police. Kadhi is 60 km north of Ahmedabad.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes, who met religious and government representatives in Ahmedabad on Sunday, said he would decide whether to withdraw thousands of troops from Gujarat only after consultations with army generals in New Delhi.

Army soldiers were deployed in riot-hit cities and towns across the state on Feb. 28 after police proved ineffective in controlling the sectarian clashes.

Fernandes said Hindu and Muslim leaders had agreed to hold a peace rally in Ahmedabad on April 28 to restore confidence among members of both communities. *AP*



JAGDISH Dholia, 51, a Hindu devotee, looks up on the final day of a nine-day religious retreat buried inside a two-meter trench in Nayapura village in India's Central State of Madhya Pradesh, April 21. The devotee undertook the arduous task to pray for the Rain God to show his mercy in the state, which has been reeling under a severe drought for the past three years. REUTERS

FRENCH extreme right National Front party leader Jean-Marie le Pen addresses supporters at his campaign headquarters in Saint Cloud near Paris, April 21 after beating French socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin in the first round to face President Jacques Chirac in a May 5 runoff. REUTERS

France reels under success of far-right Le Pen in polls

PARIS—France was reeling Monday amid protests and international condemnation after far-right politician Jean-Marie Le Pen won a stunning upset to set up a showdown against incumbent Jacques Chirac in the second round of presidential elections.

National newspapers were devoted to Sunday's first round of the polls in which Le Pen—against all indications by pollsters—garnered 17 percent of the vote behind Chirac with 19.7 percent, beating Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin into third place.

Fourteen other candidates collected the rest of the ballots.

Jospin, 64, who scored 16 percent after a record low turnout, announced he would resign from political life after the second round of the elections, which takes place on May 5.

His departure leaves the mainstream left leaderless just before June legislative elections.

Spontaneous anti-Le Pen protests gathering thousands took place in Paris and other cities overnight. Riot police in the capital fired tear gas to disperse demonstrators early Monday.

Politicians from Jospin's Socialists and other left-wing parties said they would vote Chirac in the second round just to counter Le Pen, and leaders of Muslim and Jewish communities urged their members to do the same.

"Shock" and "No" were how the left-leaning newspapers Le Parisien and Liberation headlined the showing of Le Pen, a 73-year-old former paratrooper who espouses anti-EU and racially divisive anti-immigration policies, and who once infamously described the Holocaust as "a detail of history."

"The Le Pen bomb" was France-Soir's take. "Earthquake" was how the center-right Le Figaro and the center-left Le Monde described it.

"It wasn't a first round, it was a cataclysm," Liberation wrote in an editorial.

"Today's hangover is horrible . . . France is being pointed at, with a jabbing finger, as a source of shame among democracies."

Foreign media were scathing.

"Day of shame," Britain's top-selling newspaper The Sun said. Its leftwing tabloid rival, the Daily Mirror splashed a headline reading "France backs racist Le Pen."

The Times broadsheet said, "This is by far the best result for a candidate representing the xenophobic, anti-immigrant far-right anywhere in Europe . . . Voters should be shocked by what they have done. France must now deal with the consequences."

Israeli newspaper Maariv said Le Pen's success could "provoke a chain reaction in other countries and stoke the rise of fascist and anti-immigrant feeling" while Israeli public radio described the ultranationalist as "neo-fascist, racist, anti-semitic and xenophobic." *AFP*

Car bomb explodes in Madrid

MADRID—A car bomb exploded in northern Madrid early Monday, causing no casualties, emergency services said.

There was some considerable damage, according to first reports, after the bomb went off in a street in the Ventilla district which was apparently deserted. Four people were treated for shock.

The immediate area lost its electricity supply after the blast, a fire services spokesperson said.

Windows in the area were blown out and residents said that nearby buildings shook.

Madrid prefect Francisco Javier Ansuategui, who rushed to the scene, said that everything pointed to a terrorist attack, without naming any suspects.

Police said that two people had left a Ford Fiesta on the street at around 2300 GMT Sunday (7 a.m. in Manila) and it exploded several minutes later.

The target of the attack could have been the nearby offices of the Spanish oil company Repsol, police added.

On Saturday Basque separatist group exploded a car bomb in the Basque town of Getxo, near Bilbao.

The last ETA attack in Madrid occurred last November. Then a car bomb left four people seriously injured. *AFP*

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LOCATION	DIESEL	Unleaded Gasoline		
		93 RON		95 RON
		Red	Green	Blue
McArthur Highway, Valenzuela				
Caltex	13.50	17.33	16.77	
Flying V	13.49	17.35	16.72	
Petron	13.37 - 13.91	17.77	17.10 - 17.14	18.20
Pinoy	13.37			
Shell	13.37 - 13.91	17.77 - 17.78	17.14 - 17.26	18.13 - 18.18
Total	13.91	17.77	17.14	
Potrero, Malabon				
Caltex	13.64	17.33	16.77	
Seaoil	13.49	17.33	16.72	
Shell	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.13
Navotas				
Caltex	13.60 - 13.64	17.67	16.91 - 17.10	
Petron	13.86	17.77 - 17.87		
Grace Park, Kalookan City				
Caltex	13.84	17.69	17.07	
Petron	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.27
Shell	13.91	17.77	17.14 - 17.16	18.13 - 18.16
Araneta Ave., Quezon City				
Caltex	13.64	17.40	16.77	
Cityoil	13.49	17.35	16.74	
Flying V	13.49	17.35	16.72	
Shell	13.64 - 13.91	17.41 - 17.77	16.85 - 17.41	17.76 - 18.13
Cubao, Quezon City				
Caltex	13.91	17.77	17.14	
Petron	13.29 - 13.94	17.25 - 17.82	16.64 - 17.17	
Seaoil	13.49	17.35	16.72	
Shell	13.91	17.76	17.14	18.22
Mindanao Ave., Quezon City				
Caltex	13.64	17.40	16.77	
Flying V	13.49	17.35	16.72	
Petron	13.91	17.77	17.14	
Seaoil	13.49	17.35	16.42	
Shell	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.13
A. Bonifacio St., Marikina City				
Caltex	13.64	17.40	16.77	
Shell	13.91	17.78	17.14	18.18
Pres. Quirino Ave., Manila				
Caltex	13.10	17.09	16.29	
Flying V	12.99	17.10	16.30	
Metro Car Care F/S	12.99	17.00	16.40	
Shell	13.96	17.73	17.17	18.13
Sampaloc, Manila				
Caltex	13.00	17.16	16.35	
Diesel Station	13.15			
Petron	13.86	17.77	17.11	
Seaoil	12.95	17.10	16.30	
Shell	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.13
Sta. Mesa, Manila				
Caltex	13.25	17.20	16.35	
Cityoil	13.40	17.35	16.65	
Petron	13.49	17.46	16.76	
Pinoy	13.20		16.65	
Seaoil	13.40	17.35	16.72	
Shell	13.82 - 13.96	17.73 - 17.74	17.17	18.12 - 18.13
Greenhills, San Juan				
Caltex	13.53 - 13.64	17.45 - 17.47	16.88 - 16.92	
Petron	13.90 - 13.91	17.82 - 17.84	17.25 - 17.29	18.20 - 18.27
Shell	13.92	17.78	17.22	18.13
P. Guevarra St., San Juan				
Caltex	13.69	17.49	16.87	
Petron	13.86	17.77	17.11	18.18
Pasig Blvd., Pasig City				
Caltex	13.64	17.50	16.87	
Petron	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.18
Seaoil	13.61	17.37	16.74	
Shell	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.08 - 18.13
Ortigas Ave. Ext., Cainta				
Caltex	13.64	17.40	16.77	
Flying V	13.61	17.37	16.74	
Petron	13.91	17.77	17.14	18.32
PTT	13.61	17.37	16.74	
Seaoil	13.61	17.37	16.74	
Boni Ave., Mandaluyong				
Caltex	13.63	17.45	16.88	
Petron	13.85	17.70	17.12	18.10
Shell	13.91	17.74	17.17	18.13
Unioil	13.40			
Kamagong St., Makati City				
Caltex	13.56 - 13.66	17.40 - 17.49	16.80 - 16.88	
Petron	13.86	17.77	17.11	
Shell	14.01	17.73	17.17	18.13
Total	14.01	18.06	17.17	
Makati Business District				
Caltex	13.96	17.84	17.39	
Petron	14.01	17.84	17.27	18.23
Shell	14.01 - 14.11	17.78 - 17.88	17.22 - 17.32	18.13 - 18.23
Pasong Tamo, Makati City				
Caltex	13.75 - 13.78	17.84 - 17.90	17.22 - 17.26	
Petron	13.91	17.86	17.21	
Shell	14.01	17.78	17.17	18.13
Domestic Area, Pasay City				
Caltex	13.61	17.41 - 17.44	16.82 - 16.85	
Petron	13.92	17.76	17.11	
Shell	13.96	17.73	17.17	18.13
Taguig				
Caltex	13.64 - 13.65	17.41 - 17.64	16.85	
Lan-Gas	13.29	16.68	16.33	
Petron	13.97	17.86	17.31	
Shell	14.01	17.78	17.22	18.13
TEC G/S	13.65		17.04	
Along Sucat Road, Parañaque City				
Caltex	13.51 - 13.64	17.41 - 17.44	16.85 - 16.89	
Cityoil	13.45	17.35	16.65	
Petron	13.88 - 14.01	17.78 - 17.81	17.22 - 17.26	18.26
Shell	13.88 - 14.01	17.78 - 17.81	17.22 - 17.26	18.13
Total	13.51	17.41	16.85	
Unioil	13.49	17.36	16.85	
Muntinlupa City				
Caltex	13.60 - 13.79	17.48 - 17.63	16.88 - 17.08	
Seaoil	14.05	17.95	17.22	
Petron	13.49	17.44	16.82	
Shell	13.96 - 13.98	17.73- 17.80	17.17 - 17.29	18.13
Total	14.01	17.78	17.23	
Alabang-Zapote Road, Las Piñas				
Caltex	13.64	17.40 - 17.46	16.85 - 16.89	
Jetti	13.45	17.25	16.76	
Petron	13.49 - 13.97	17.60 - 17.72	16.74 - 17.22	17.81 - 18.12
Shell	13.91 - 14.01	17.70 - 17.78	17.17 - 17.22	18.13 - 18.23

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LEAGUE OF PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

RESOLUTION NO. 2002 - 0013

STRONGLY ENDORSING THE CONFIRMATION OF HON. HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ AS SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LEAGUE OF PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
WORKSHOP W DENR
ENVIRONMENT

UNITED FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. Governors link arms with Environment Secretary Alvarez (3rd from left) in pursuing government programs to protect the environment and manage the country's natural resources during the Consultation Workshop on Environment and Agriculture at the Manila Hotel from April 17-18. The governors also endorsed Alvarez's immediate confirmation at the Commission on Appointments. In photo (from left) are Bohol Erico Aumentado; Davao Gov. Rodolfo P. del Rosario, president of the League of Governors; Leyte Gov. Rosette Y. Lerias; Camarines Sur Gov. Luis R. Villafuerte and Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas N. Joson III.

Whereas, the country urgently needs men and women of integrity, competence and dedication to attain national economic progress, and to ensure the protection and conservation of our environment and natural resources;

Whereas, **HON. HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ** has the vision, the track-record, the experience, the competence and the skills to arrest the decline of the nation's forest cover, protect our coastal environment, stop overexploitation, minimize physical disturbance, avoid pollution, reverse sedimentation and put an end to the general neglect of our rich natural resources and wealth;

Whereas, having served the Republic as a Cabinet Member, Senator and Representative of Isabela, Secretary Alvarez has the stature and the leadership to inspire and stir a national movement that would protect and conserve our environment and natural resources;

Whereas, Secretary Alvarez has been a leading voice on the environment having authored major environmental legislation such as the *National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (NIPAS); Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) for Palawan; the Clean Air Act; Ecological Solid Waste Management Act; and the Northern Sierra Madre Protected Areas Law.*

Whereas, Secretary Alvarez has been instrumental in the approval of international environmental treaties such as the *Montreal Protocol of the Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance; Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals; UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Wastes;*

Whereas, his environmental achievements both here and abroad has earned him the International Policy Achievement Award, the first non-Western to be honoured by the prestigious Washington-based Climate Institute;

Whereas, he enjoys the trust and confidence of the League of Provinces of the Philippines, and the 79 provincial governors all over the country to fully implement the mandate and the functions of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);

Whereas, he enjoys the trust and confidence of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and people's organizations (POs) involved in the conservation and protection of the environment and natural resources;

Therefore, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved, that the League of Provinces of the Philippines strongly endorses the confirmation of **HON. HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ** as Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) where his competence and skills has been harnessed to benefit the country and the future generation of Filipinos;

Resolved finally that a copy of this Resolution be furnished to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; the Senate President, Hon. Franklin Drilon; the Speaker of the House, Hon. Jose de Venecia, Jr.; and the Honorable Members of the Commission of Appointments (CA) for their utmost consideration.

Done this 17th of April 2002, City of Manila.

Certified true and correct:

(Sgd.) GOV. JOSEFINA M. DELA CRUZ
Secretary-General

Attested by:

(Sgd.) GOV. RODOLFO P. DEL ROSARIO
National President

(Sgd.) GOV. LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE
Chairman

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2002
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A15

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NPA rebels gun down Isabela mayor

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ILAGAN, Isabela—Communist assassins gunned down Mayor Jesus Sebastian Sr. of Jones town on Monday in the lobby of the municipal hall, 86 km from this capital town.

Sebastian, 53, was attacked at about 8:30 a.m., shortly after he and other local government employees, including several policemen, attended the flag-raising ceremony.

Supt. Nelson Nario, provincial police director, said four New People's Army rebels wearing military fatigues arrived in a green Mitsubishi L-300 van at the town hall and approached Sebastian.

The mayor was then preparing for a scheduled visit to Diarao Village, reports said.

The NPA's Benito Tesorio Command based in southern Isabela claimed responsibility for the killing.

In Manila, Interior Secretary Joey Lina yesterday ordered Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, Philippine National Police chief, to conduct a thorough investigation of the killing.

"Leave no stone unturned until the perpetrators of the brutal slaying of Mayor Sebastian shall have been identified, arrested and put behind bars," Lina said.

In a two-page statement written in Filipino and signed by its spokesperson Delio Baladon, the NPA's Benito Tesorio said that among the "crimes" committed by Sebastian were his strong support for military operations against the NPA, violation of human rights, graft and corruption and land grabbing.

The rebel unit also claimed that Sebastian had received a 20-percent commission from all government projects in his town and used the money for his personal interests.

"We had repeatedly warned him to stop his illegal activities and anti-revolutionary measures. We punished Sebastian to warn other local politicians and individuals," Baladon said.

Nario said the assassins were armed with M-16 and M-14 rifles and handguns. One of them stayed in front of the van while another stood in front of the town hall, he said.

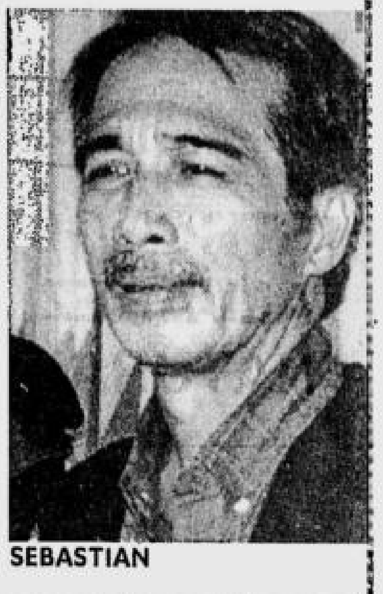
Nario said the rebels immediately disarmed the mayor's security aides. Five policemen were assigned to Sebastian, according to Nario, but he could not say if all of them were with the mayor when he was attacked.

Two rebels approached Sebastian and shot him with M-14 and M-16 rifles.

Nario said four other NPA rebels were posted in areas leading to the town hall.

Reports said Sebastian's bodyguards tried to help the mayor but the rebels fired at them.

Sebastian had three bullet wounds in the chest and was taken to the Jones Emergency Hospital. He was later transferred to the Cagayan Valley Sanitarium and Hospital in Santiago City but doctors failed to revive him. ***With reports from Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***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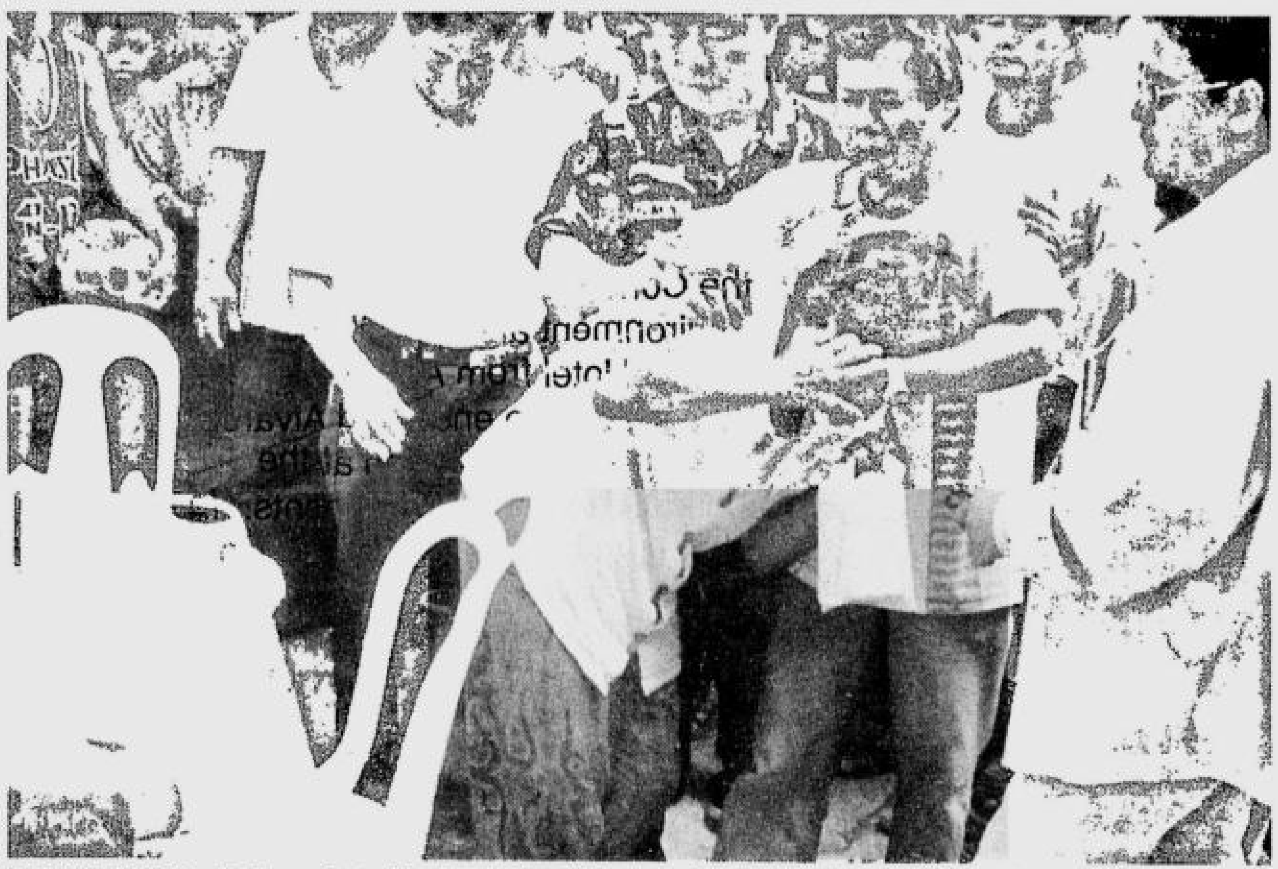
BERNADETTE Lucilo is comforted by her husband Romeo after seeing the body of her daughter Suzette lying on plastic chairs in front of the municipal hall in Labo, Camarines Norte. TONY MACASINAG/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Student slain in Bicol clash back home . . .

DARAGA, Albay—Anxiety turned to grief during the homecoming that the Lucilo family did not expect after two years.

When she left home in Barangay San Roque, this town, two years ago, Suzette Lucilo, 23, was a senior student taking up elementary education at the Bicol University in Legazpi City and was managing editor of the school organ.

Her mother Bernadette said the family had not heard of Suzette's whereabouts since then. She only knew that her daughter would be going home this month when she spoke to her sister in Manila.

Suzette had called up her mother's sister in Manila days before government soldiers clashed with suspected communist rebels in Barangay Bagong Silang Dos in Labo, Camarines Norte, on Saturday morning, according to Bernadette.

On Sunday afternoon, her parents brought home Suzette's body. She was among six alleged members of the New People's Army who were killed in the clash with Army soldiers of the 31st Infantry Battalion.

Grieving relatives and friends welcomed back Suzette. Her mother and father Romeo refused to be interviewed any further. They did not know what Suzette's life was during her two years of absence.

Relatives also claimed the body of Liezl Lirag, 17, alias Mary Grace Laideros, of Harbay, Calabanga. Unlike Suzette's, Lirag's body was in a casket.

Maj. Jose Broso, head of the Armed Forces Civil Relations Group in Southern Luzon, said one of the fatalities could be Carlito Apigo, alias Ka Jack, leader of an NPA group operating in the northern Camarines Norte towns of Sta. Elena, Capalonga, Panganiban and Labo.

The three other bodies have remained unidentified.

The government troops recovered four Armalite rifles, two laptop computers, personal belongings and communist documents from the scene of the encounter, Broso said.

Among those taken in military custody were Jennylyn Palma, 23, of Calabanga; Salome Geronimo, 48, of North Boulevard, Navotas, Metro Manila; Erlinda Montero, 60, of Harbay, Calabanga; and a 16-year-old girl from Barangay Bagong Silang Dos, Labo.

Palma, alleged assistant of Lucilo in preparing communications for the NPA group, said she had joined the armed dissident movement one month ago.

Montero said her son Antonio, 31, had invited her to the area for a vacation just days ago before the encounter.

Antonio, she said, was an elementary education graduate and used to teach in Baguio City.

Antonio was among the wounded rebels who escaped during the encounter. ***Tony Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

. . . As Batangas cops exploit NPA texting

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TANAUAN CITY—Text messaging did New People's Army (NPA) rebels in.

Police killed one rebel, wounded three and captured 11 others in a series of encounters in Malvar town in Batangas, on Saturday, according to Supt. Rolando Lorenzo, provincial police director.

The wounded rebels escaped, while a policeman, identified as SPO1 Melencio Landicho, suffered a bullet wound in the left foot and was taken to the Mercado General Hospital here.

Lorenzo said the lawmen pursued a white van headed for Barangay Sambat, this city, that did not stop at a highway checkpoint at about 11:30 p.m.

When the policemen caught up with the van in Malvar town, its occupants sprayed them with bullets, Lorenzo said. The law enforcers retaliated after realizing that they were confronting NPA rebels.

The rebels reportedly managed to reach and pass through the tollgate to the access road to Southern Tagalog after holding its guard at gunpoint. Lorenzo said the dissidents had intended to flee to Taysan town.

The policemen cornered the NPA group and captured five rebels.

Lorenzo said that the policemen discovered that the captured rebels had sent text messages to their comrades through their mobile phones, asking for reinforcements.

The lawmen continued the exchange of text messages and told the rebels' reinforcement to rescue them in Tanauan City.

When the NPA team arrived at the rendezvous point aboard a green van, an exchange of gunfire ensued.

The policemen captured three more rebels, Lorenzo said.

He said that the policemen again sent text messages to the NPA, pretending to be NPA rebels wounded in combat. Again, they asked for reinforcement.

The NPA rebels reached the pickup point in a jeepney, Lorenzo said. Another clash ensued.

One rebel was killed, while three others were captured.

Three rebels were wounded but managed to escape. "They might have already died or are still hiding somewhere in Malvar," Lorenzo said.

A Malvar policeman was also wounded.

Police recovered from the slain rebels one .45 cal. pistol, one Armalite rifle, one AK-47 rifle, 1,000 rounds of assorted ammunitions, magazines and one grenade.

Lorenzo claimed that the rebels were on a mission to collect "revolutionary taxes" from local businessmen.

Group restocks Zambales bay with giant clams

MASINLOC, Zambales—In a bid to prevent the extinction of an endangered marine species and resuscitate the dying coral reefs here, a multisectoral group launched on Friday a coral transplantation and giant clam restocking project at the Oyon Bay here.

The project, which aims to propagate the giant clam (*Tridacna gigas*) on two demonstration sites in the bay, will also serve as a gauge of the "environment- friendliness" of the controversial Masinloc coal-fired thermal power plant. The project site is a few meters away from the water-cooling exhaust system of the plant.

The project is a joint effort of the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute, local government of Masinloc, officials of Barangay Bani, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Power Corp. and the power plant.

Dr. Edgardo Gomez, head of the UPMSI, said the coral transplantation and the restocking of giant clams were aimed to attract planktons and fish that would bring life to damaged reefs.

Gomez said the project hoped to increase fish catch of fishermen living in the area and to enhance tourism activities.

The Masinloc Bay area is famous for its natural seascapes and fish sanctuaries. It is an ideal scuba diving site.

"The condition of Philippine reefs still leaves much to be desired despite past conservation efforts," Gomez said.

Arresting the degradation of coral reefs, he said, was only half of the challenge. Efforts must be pooled to bring the reefs back to their normal productivity, he said.

Gomez said this could be achieved through transplantation or reseeding of the reef and by raising the awareness and appreciation of the residents of the value of these resources to their lives.

The *Tridacna gigas*, called *buka* or *taklobo* in Zambales and nearby Pangasinan, is the largest in the clam species. It is 1.37 meters long and weighs up to 400 kilograms.

Gomez said the UPMSI and its partners were also planning to put up giant clam stocking and coral transplantation demonstration sites in Cebu, Negros and Tawi-Tawi.
Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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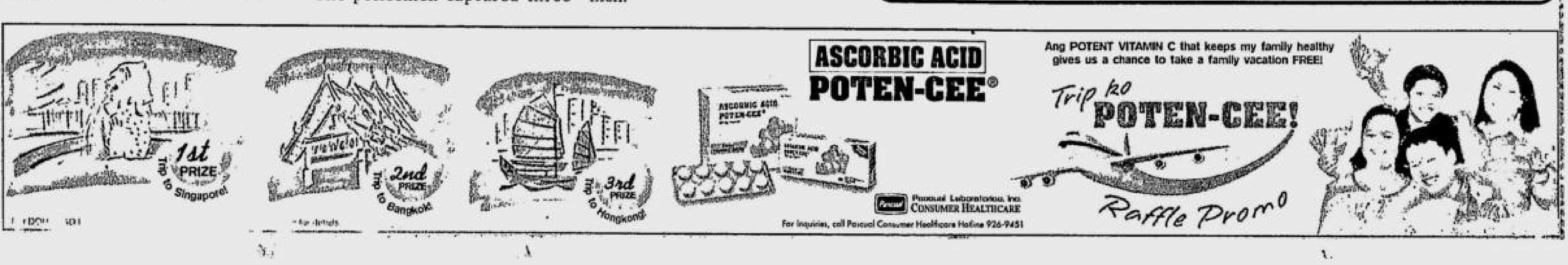
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Macli-ing statue rites shelved due to tribal war

By Desiree Caluza
and Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Due to the ongoing tribal war between Bugnay villagers in Tinglayan, Kalinga and Betwagan villagers in Sadanga, Mt. Province, the scheduled unveiling of the statue of Cordillera martyr Macli-ing Dulag this year was shelved.

"The unveiling of the life-sized monument of Macli-ing would have been one of the major highlights of the Cordillera Day celebration on Wednesday in Barangay Dupag in Tabuk, Kalinga had the tribal war not erupted in December last year," said Joan Carling, chair of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance.

Cordillera Day is celebrated yearly to commemorate the death of Dulag, a Bugnay leader who led the Cordillera peoples' protests against the proposed Chico Dam in the late 1970s.

Delegates from the Cordillera and other parts of the country and from Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand and the United States are expected to attend this year's celebrations.

Carling said residents of Bugnay had already committed a portion of their land as a site for Dulag's statue.

The ongoing tribal war, which stemmed from boundary disputes between the two tribes, has been a longstanding conflict among the two villages, Carling said.

The tribal war has already claimed three casualties from both villages, she added.

But the Armed Forces' Civil Relations Group for Northern Luzon said 11 people have been killed since the tribal war began last December. Four of them were victims during last week's skirmishes between the Betwagan and the Bugnay tribes.

"Originally, our plan was to include the installation and unveiling of the Dulag monument in Bugnay, since this was the appeal of his son. But unfortunately, there is a tribal war. Our plan now is to help in settling the disputes between the two tribes by talking to the elders of the community," Carling said.

Aside from the statue, the installation of a marker to honor Dulag in Bugnay was also shelved because of the tribal war.

The marker project will be funded by a group of private employees based in Metro Manila.

Abel Manliclic, sales director of Bayer Philippines, said he was eager to help Dulag's family through the commemorative marker after he read an Inquirer story last year that said Dulag's son, Francis, wants to build a marker in Bugnay to honor his father's heroism.

"When I was a student activist in the 1980s, I was fascinated with Macli-ing Dulag's story on how he fought for the rights of his village. Although he was not educated, he was able to prove his point; he fought for his people," Manliclic said.

His other activist friends in the 1980s who are now members of the Rotary Club of Manila Bay have promised support, by raising funds for the marker, he said.

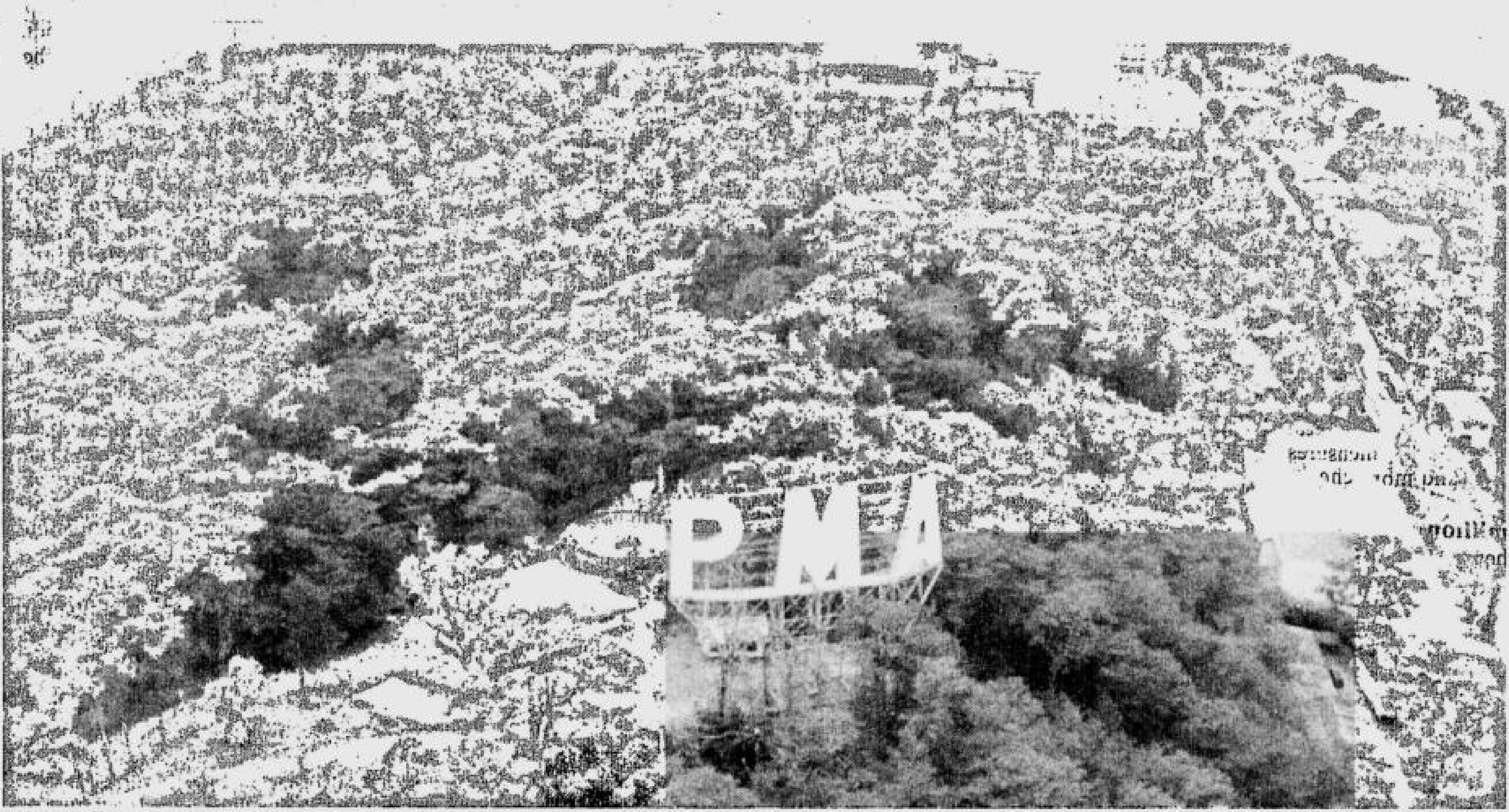
The tribal war between Betwagan and Sadanga began last Dec. 4 when Betwagan tribesmen attacked the Bugnay men who were allegedly logging over a forest pocket in the tribes' boundary. A Bugnay member was killed in that encounter.

The Bugnay men retaliated by killing a Betwagan native in Tabuk, Kalinga. They again killed a Betwagan man in Kalinga.

Cordillera People's Liberation Army leader Mailed Molina, who tried to broker a peace pact between the two tribes last February, said four other men were killed in January and February.

The two tribes decided to confine the killings within their areas, even as the local government and the CPLA had been trying to stop the conflict.

The root of the problem—the so-called Macli-ing boundary—is a 30-hectare forested lot, which both tribes had been claiming to be theirs.



GIANT Philippine Military Academy smacks of Hollywood.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

PMA goes Hollywood with giant sign on mountaintop

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—The Philippine Military Academy has gone "Hollywood," coming up with its own giant sign atop a mountain here.

Members of the PMA Magiting Class of 1970 lit the P3.8-million PMA sign on April 11 atop the Superintendent's Hill inside Fort del Pilar.

The steel structure, known as the PMA beacon, is 12 meters high and eight meters wide and weighs about 50 tons. Three 1,000-watt and 11 500-watt bulbs inside the sign ensure that the sign will be seen from afar.

PMA officials said they were planning to build a view deck to give visitors a better location to view the beacon.

The PMA beacon is the "farewell gift" of its outgoing superintendent, Maj. Gen. Rufo de Veyra, who retired from the military service on April 6.

Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, the former chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Civil Relations Service and former AFP spokesperson, replaced De Veyra on April 12.

Adan, in his acceptance speech, acknowledged that information technology will be at the forefront of the AFP's "new kind of warfare."

"It is our constant purpose to ensure that our graduates' knowledge, skills and appreciation continue to be relevant and responsive to the new forms of conflict and warfare even as they leave this institution," Adan said.

"Gallantry in the battlefield and tactician know-how could be matched with and enhanced by information technology," he said.

"We shall continue to fortify our cadets against self-deception and easy consolation and remind them that logic and reason precede brute force or violence," he said.

De Veyra said that aside from the PMA beacon, his administration will leave behind the so-called "Sundial Covenant."

"In my brief tenure, I have had the unpleasant task of unmasking the three-headed nemesis that has plagued the academy for too long: Bullying, also known as hazing or maltreatment; mediocrity, also known as '*puwede na yan*' attitude; and dishonor, also known as 'just don't get caught' philosophy," he said.

The "Sundial Covenant," formulated by the PMA cadets last year, sought out solutions to the problems of hazing, poor academic performance and adherence to the PMA's Honor Code. ***Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Mountaineer dies in Vizcaya adventure race

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A participant in a mountaineering congress here died after participating in one of the event's activities on Saturday.

Officials of the Mountaineering Federation of the Philippines Inc. (MFPI) and organizers of the 1st Mountaineering Congress here identified the victim as Anthony Sibayan of the Sagada Environmental Guides Association in Sagada, Mt. Province.

Reports said Sibayan was found by participating bikers before noon Saturday lying unconscious on a bridge in Sitio Barobbob here.

Sibayan reportedly finished the race and reached the MFPI base camp in Barangay Masoc here but decided to return to a trail to retrieve a rock he left behind for the adventure race.

"The rock was supposed to be returned to the base camp after kicking it down while biking. He might have thought that his participation will be jeopardized if he returned without the rock," said one of the participants.

Sibayan was taken to the Veterans Regional Hospital here but doctors failed to revive him at 3 p.m. Saturday.

According to congress participants, Sibayan and his brother Simeon and colleagues from Sagada, arrived at the base camp on Saturday dawn.

Reports said Sibayan immediately participated in the adventure race, called "Takbo-Lakad (Run-Walk)," held that morning.

A check with the MFPI registration center showed that Sibayan failed to register but was able to sign a waiver showing that he would accept the risks of the events that he would participate in.

Congress registration personnel said it was Sibayan's brother, Simeon, who officially registered. ***Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Bohol tourist police formed vs terrorists

THE INFLUX of tourists in Bohol is expected to get a boost with the deployment of specially trained tourist security officers taken from the ranks of the finest in the province.

A press statement issued by Gov. Erico Aumentado said 45 police officers will be assigned to secure tourist facilities and destinations.

This makes the province the first outside Metro Manila to initiate such a move to fight the scare of terrorism and kidnappings.

Aumentado ordered the creation of the Bohol Tourist Police upon the recommendation of the Provincial Tourism Council, according to the statement.

"With the presence of the tourist cops, our visitors will feel protected and secured anywhere they go as they savor our people's friendship and the exotic sights of our island," he said.

The Alona Beach Community Foundation, which is based on Panglao Island, proposed the formation of the tourist police to lure both domestic and foreign visitors.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains on Bicol region and the Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI35° Lo 23°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 26° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 37° Lo 25°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Widespread Rains	HI 30° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 26°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Loyesa, PDI Research/04/23/02

EARTH DAY

Cooking oil maker given 'Lason Award' in Davao

DAVAO CITY—For consistently violating environmental laws since 1964, a cooking oil manufacturer was awarded the first "Lason Award" from the Save the Davao Gulf Foundation during yesterday's Earth Day celebration here.

Margarita Moran-Floirendo, foundation chair, said the trophy, featuring a skull and crossbones, was given to Pacific Oil Farmers Inc. in Bunawan District.

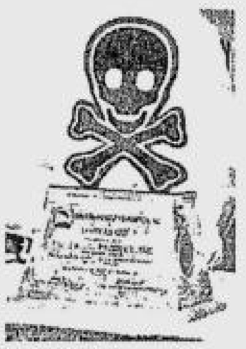
Eight other firms were considered for the award, Floirendo said.

She said that the foundation would also file a complaint against Pacific Oil before the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' adjudication board.

She cited a DENR report that showed that the company's untreated wastes were spilling into the Bunawan River through an open concrete canal.

The company never took steps to correct defects in its waste disposal system despite repeated notices from the DENR, Floirendo said. "Every year, there are violations committed by the company."

Raquel Villanueva, supervising environmental management specialist of the Environmental Management Bureau, said the findings of Floirendo's group and of the DENR were enough for the adjudication board to start hearings on the case against Pacific Oil.



'LASON Award' trophy

The Inquirer tried to get the company's comments but was told that its administrative officer, Orlando de la Rosa, was not available. De la Rosa was the only authorized officer to issue comments on behalf of the company.

The Save the Davao Gulf Foundation also rewarded several organizations for their pro-environment practices.

The Kinasang-an Foundation Inc. in Talomo District was given P10,000 for its proper observance of the Clean Air Act and the Solid Waste Management Act by practicing segregation, recycling and composting, and for its other outstanding projects.

The Tambongon Development Cooperative in Barangay Lasang got P3,000 for its mangrove development project.

In Cagayan de Oro City, environmentalists and advocates of sustainable development advocates denounced the worsening pollution and illegal logging in Northern Mindanao, which they said were compounded by alleged corruption in the DENR.

They also warned the National Economic and Development Authority, Regional Development Council, DENR and local government units of widespread protests once the planned coal-fired power plant in Villanueva, Misamis Oriental, is approved.

The establishment of the power plant would worsen pollution, they said. ***Anthony Allada, Ayan Mellejor and Grace Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Iloilo town with zero forest cover tries to heal self

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOAQUIN, Iloilo—This town, with zero forest cover and degraded seas, marked Earth Day yesterday by holding activities to awaken the locals on the need to protect the environment.

Municipal employees gathered near the beach and had a food fair. Taking center stage were the town's popular delicacy, "*bandi*," which is *muscovado* brown sugar topped with roasted peanuts, and summer fruits like *camachile*, *sineguelas* and mangoes.

Some 50 schoolchildren, aged six to 15, turned up for an on-the-spot drawing contest. They drew mostly mountains, seas and sailboats, which are common in San Joaquin, 53 km from Iloilo City.

Films on sound waste management were shown after lunch. Fathers and sons joined the kite-flying contest.

Officials also picked the Miss World Earth Day from among the prettiest girls in town.

The municipal employees joined the ceremonial planting of mahogany saplings in the tree park and nurseries and *talisay* trees along the beach.

"It's an activity by which the town can heal the earth and heal itself," said Lita Velmonte, coordinator of the Earth Day activities.

Velmonte explained that the town has not done much to reforest the denuded hills and mountains due to years of slash-and-burn farming, wanton cutting for fuel wood and charcoal making, among others.

It has also yet to heal itself from a bitter electoral contest last year that led to the death of its former mayor, Jesus Sibya.

The principal accused in Sibya's murder is former mayor Sebastian Serag, who was defeated by Sibya's widow Daisy in the mayoral race in last May 14 elections.

Aside from the loss of forest cover, the town suffers from receding coastlines, unregulated quarrying of beach sand and pebbles and landslides during rainy months.

Velmonte said she hoped that the Earth Day activities would move people to action, in a manner more "communal, not church, not political."

Velmonte is formerly connected with the University of the Philippines in Diliman but decided to retire at her family's 50-hectare farm in Jawod, San Joaquin.

Nelson Gorospe, head of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), said the town has 1,700 hectares of coastal waters called the San Joaquin Seascape where a community-based conservation project has been ongoing since 1995.

The project intends to rehabilitate the coral reefs along the coastal villages of Cata-an, Igcadlum, Lawigan, Igcandao and Sinugbuhan.

Gorospe said 43 percent of the corals was degraded due to gathering for sale to tourists, cyanide fishing and use of pesticides and other farm chemicals in the uplands.

The San Joaquin Seascape is the second to be declared in Iloilo province, after Pan de Azucar Seascape in Concepcion, a northern town which also celebrates Earth Day by holding a festival.

The Cenro, which is part of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, hopes to involve the community more in Bantay Dagat and Bantay Gubat groups to protect the town's fragile ecosystem.

It is working with officials led by Mayor Sibya and Vice Mayor Marilyn Silfavan.

This year's Earth Day celebration is the second to be held in San Joaquin, but Velmonte dreams of making it a yearly affair.

"It is to mark the day, and say thank you that we exist this day," she said.

Bomb rocks General Santos again

From Page A1

"*Pasensiya na*," a certain Abu Muslim Alghazie, alleged leader of Al Harakatul Islamiyah, the formal name of Abu Sayyaf, said of the bombings.

In an interview over Radio Mindanao Network in Davao City, Alghazie warned of more explosions in General Santos City if the operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan continued.

US Special Forces are training Filipino soldiers in fighting Abu Sayyaf bandits, who have been holding a US missionary couple hostage for almost 11 months.

"We just want to prove to them that we do exist and that they should not underestimate the strength and capability of our group," he said in another interview over dxRR Radyo Agong in Koronadal City.

Retaliation

Alghazie said the bomb that exploded in General Santos was intentionally placed in a crowded area to harm civilians.

"That was just a retaliation against the atrocities committed by government forces against innocent Moro civilians in Basilan and Jolo," Alghazie said in Filipino.

He warned the police and military to exercise caution in arresting suspects in the bombings, otherwise his group would launch another wave of bombings in General Santos.

Alghazie bragged about having links with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Police said the two arrested suspects—Molikin Ambe and Bobby Sabelo—had been tagged by witnesses as those who left behind the bomb that exploded in front of the Fitmart Shopping Center on Daproza Avenue.

MNLF bomb expert

Ambe, 30, and Sabelo, 23, belong to the group of one Commander Benjie Puntuan, a bomb expert of the MNLF, said Senior Supt. Bartolome Baluyot, police chief for Central Mindanao.

Intelligence agents arrested the two men during a raid on Puntuan's home in Barangay Apopong in General Santos at around 1 a.m. on Monday. They caught up with the two after a brief chase. Puntuan, however, managed to escape under cover of darkness.

"They were having a meeting inside the house of Commander Puntuan when the raiding team arrived. Upon sensing the presence of the lawmen, the suspects scampered off in different directions," Baluyot said in a report to Camp Crame.

The agents confiscated a 20-gauge pistol and a .38 cal. revolver from Ambe and Sabelo, and seized a hand grenade at Puntuan's home.

While the suspects are believed to be members of the MNLF, Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, national police spokesperson, said police had yet to pinpoint the group that carried out the bombings.

"We're still determining it. Our investigation is ongoing," he said when asked if investigators had determined whether the suspects belonged to the renegade group of Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari, who is detained on rebellion charges.

Espina further said that it would be too early for the police investigators to say if the Abu Sayyaf or the shadowy group, Indigenous People's Federal Army (Ipfa), was behind the bombings.

"At this point, it will be unfair to label anybody because we have not concluded the investigation," he said.

Ipfa had earlier claimed planting dud bombs in Metro Manila last month.

Last week, police identified engineer Rogelio Adamat as the primary suspect in the bomb scare after his prints were found in an improvised bomb found on Taft Avenue in Manila.

Ipfa, primary suspect

The National Bureau of Investigation yesterday maintained that the Ipfa was the primary suspect in the bombings that hit General Santos City.

"(Earlier) intelligence reports indicated that the next series of bombing attacks will be conducted by the Ipfa as the group expressed willingness to detonate explosives in an effort to attract government attention to their demands," NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said.

Wycoco said that the Abu Sayyaf, which claimed responsibility for the bombing, might have formed a tactical alliance with the Ipfa.

He noted that the bandit group had no capability to launch a bombing campaign because its members were on the run.

An intelligence officer said last month that the series of fake bomb finds was only a "dry run" for a repeat of the bloody Rizal Day bombings in Metro Manila in 2000.

The officer claimed that the Ipfa was only a "front organization" for a Muslim secessionist group.

The secessionist group allegedly did not want to be blamed once the real bombs start exploding.

Fear, helpfulness

In General Santos, a feeling of "fear and helplessness" is gripping the business sector.

Manuel Yaphuckon, acting chair of the General Santos City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told reporters that local businessmen met on Monday morning to discuss the situation.

In Zamboanga City, Col. Francisco Gudani, Southcom deputy chief for operations, said the explosions in General Santos City were part of the terrorists' plot targeting urban centers "to ease the pressures we are exerting in Basilan and Sulu provinces."

In Davao City, members of the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit and the City Mobile Group were given instructions to conduct inspections in malls, churches and vital installations.

Vice Mayor Luis Bonguyan said the police were also putting up random checkpoints in the city's exit and entry points. ***With reports from Julie S. Alipala, Anthony S. Allada and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AP and Reuters***

'State of emergency' reports sow confusion

From page A1

only in General Santos City but also in Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato.

The Presidential News Desk immediately picked this up and issued an official press release, quoting her as having said that it was imperative for authorities to get "the sources of the bombs and who did the bombings."

Instead of a declaration of a state of emergency, Afable's office issued a statement by the President in which she outlined measures to be undertaken following the bombings in General Santos.

In her statement, Ms Macapagal directed the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police to deploy additional forces "to suppress the terrorist acts and lawless violence."

"I am ordering an intensified crackdown on all terrorist suspects," she said.

The President called on the Department of Interior and Local Government to work with local authorities to impose measures like curfews and more checkpoints.

P5-million reward

The other measures are a P5-million reward for the arrest of the perpetrators, no bail for suspects, and relief assistance to victims and their families.

In the same statement, the President called on Congress to speed up the passage of an anti-terrorism bill, which seeks to increase the powers of the police and military to conduct surveillance. The bill also seeks to extend the period for detaining suspects without bail and the period for filing charges against them.

The President added that the government would strengthen "back channels" to ensure the support of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the government's anti-terrorism campaign.

The statement did not mention any state of emergency in General Santos.

Golez's announcement conjured images of the crackdown on the Abu Sayyaf last year in Basilan where scores of suspected bandits and their sympathizers were arrested without warrants.

Golez said that what he expected in General Santos City was "similar to the Basilan solution."

He added that the declaration of a state of emergency was backed up by the Department of Justice, which was represented in the committee meeting by Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee, and Avelino Cruz, who is the chief presidential legal counsel.

But in his press briefing, Afable said that Ms Macapagal had been informed of the committee's recommendation that no extra-ordinary measures be taken and that she had agreed to adopt it.

Generic

Asked about Golez's statement, Afable said there was "really no conflict because Secretary Golez might have been talking about a state of emergency in generic terms."

"The general idea within the oversight committee was really to calibrate this so that we could take first the necessary measures without invoking extra-ordinary means," Afable said.

At past 6 p.m., Golez sent a text message to clear up the confusion.

Golez said "some likened state of emergency to the suspension of writ of habeas corpus. Not correct. State of emergency is a generic term that covers three options: 1. Calling on AFP, PNP to suppress lawless violence and intensified crackdown on terrorists; 2. Suspend writ of habeas corpus; 3. Martial law.

"We are taking option No. 1, and not two or three just like the Basilan measure in July last year. So to avoid misinterpretation, let's not call it state of emergency but intensified crackdown," he said.

Conditional support

In the Senate, a senator gave his "conditional support" to Ms Macapagal's reported decision to place General Santos under a state of emergency.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said "the declaration should follow constitutional processes which include the proclamation by the President of a state of national or local emergency that will be concurred in by Congress."

But Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar said the government "must not jump into hasty decisions (since) the local officials in the concerned areas still have the situation under control."

In the House of Representatives, Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin urged the President to convene the National Security Council to consider "unusual steps" to address the new spate of violence in the South.

Salapuddin said the NSC would be the right body to consider the proposal for the President to declare a state of emergency in several provinces in Mindanao.

Salapuddin, a congressman of Basilan, said he was fully supportive of the President's decision to place General Santos City under a state of emergency.

"My only apprehension is there might be wholesale violation of human rights," Salapuddin said.

While in General Santos, Ms Macapagal declined to issue a statement on the possibility of placing the city under the state of emergency. The President instead told the reporters to clarify the issue with former General Santos Mayor Adelbert Antonino.

Antonino later told reporters that the President still needed evidence proving that the bombings were done by Moro extremists before reaching any decision.

"She has not decided whether to place the city under a state of emergency. She has yet to meet with members of the National Security Council yet," Antonino said.

City council

Shortly after Ms Macapagal left, the city council passed a resolution urging the President to place the city under a state of emergency.

"The city should be placed under a state of emergency to prevent further terrorist acts. We would like to know from our local police and military officials whether we have seen the last (of the) bombings," opposition councilor Franklin Gacal Jr. told the INQUIRER.

Aside from the resolution, the council approved a proposal declaring the city under a state of calamity.

But in Davao City, the Free Legal Assistance Group warned of the dangers of declaring a state of emergency in General Santos.

"The recent past showed that such measures resulted in indiscriminate warrantless arrest of civilians and gross violation of human rights in the guise of hot pursuit operations. They also resulted in the racial profiling and indiscriminate rounding up of the usual suspects: the Moro people," Carlos Isagani Zarate, Flag coordinator for Davao City said in a statement.

The MILF also aired its apprehension about the possible declaration of a state of emergency.

Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, said the military should not threaten the volatile peace process by conducting operations in Moro-populated areas. ***With reports from Aquiles Z. Zonio, Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Juliet L. Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila***

Text messages to Biazon claim bombers in Metro

By Rocky Nazareno

ARE the bombers in Metro Manila?

In text messages to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, that's what a group said yesterday as it also claimed responsibility for the Gen. Santos City bombings.

Three bombs are now allegedly in place in a large shopping mall in Metro Manila.

From 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., the group warned of more violence "just like a repeat of the Rizal Day bombings" in 2000.

"Death to American and Christian Filipinos, Islamic Jihad, Allah be Praised to our Muslim heroes of Oplan Gen San," the first text message read.

Saying that the "Gen. San bombing was just the start," the texter also revealed that "NCR (National Capital Region) would be next unless our brother Muslims would be freed by the military."

The last message called for the "ouster of Americans from Philippine soil . . . or many innocent people will die for time has come."

Or else . . .

Another text message sent to Biazon later in the afternoon read, "stop the military aggression in Mindanao against our Muslim brothers or (else) innocent civilians will be sacrificed."

The text messages came from cellular phone no. 0916-834-0388.

Senate reporters called the number and a certain Abdul Khalil answered.

According to Khalil, his group is already in Metro Manila ready to wage terror.

"I do not like to unduly raise panic here. For all we know, the sender is a crackpot or a prankster," Biazon said.

In fact, when the call was made, Khalil claimed to be at the shopping mall scouting for drop-off points to plant three bombs.

Khalil, who claimed that his group had gotten the bombs "from a friend from Malaysia," spoke with a heavy Muslim accent.

The INQUIRER tried to verify the veracity of the messages and got this message back: "Mr. Reporter, can you do me a favor? Pls. publish our general demand of all Muslims in Mindanao. I do know that you know it because it's the same old demand we are fighting for."

Apparently, the "same old demand" Khalil was referring to was for Muslim extremists to install a separate state for the Bangsa Moro.

Then came Khalil's next message: "If you want to talk to one of our think-tank. Mar Abdullah."

Senate reporters placed a call on the number (0916-3121000) and was answered by a man who spoke intermittently in English.

"Yes, I know about that. I will call you back in a while," he answered.

The man added he was "just in front of the Senate building" but never returned the call.

The INQUIRER called the cellular phone number and was answered by a lady who said to call the landline number 045-9636484 instead because of the poor connection.

The INQUIRER called the landline number and asked whose office was on the other line.

The lady answered: "Office of (Pampanga) Vice Gov. Mikey Arroyo."

A few minutes later, Khalil added that, included in their hit list, "is the entire family of this number."

Guingona proposes change in future RP-US war games

From page A1

soldiers—bringing the total number of US troops in the Philippines to almost 4,000, the highest since the US bases closed down in 1992. The exercises have been conducted annually since 1981, but this year's drills include the largest number of US participants.

Guingona, one of the 12 senators who voted to close the bases, was bypassed in the decision-making process that led to Balikatan 02-1, which is currently ongoing in Zamboanga and Basilan.

Balikatan 02-2 is a three-week exercise in Luzon that will emphasize small unit infantry leadership, jungle warfare training and civil works projects.

Guingona, also the foreign secretary, was joined at the opening rites by new US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone. When asked if the bomb blasts in Gen. Santos City on Sunday which claimed 14 lives would affect the conduct of the joint exercises, Ricciardone replied, "That's silly."

US candidate?

Protests greeted the start of the second phase of Balikatan, with at least 500 activists belonging to various groups in Central Luzon staging protest actions in the former Clark Airbase and Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija.

In Congress, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said the Balikatan exercises were a measure of how desperate the President was in courting US support for her candidacy in the 2004 presidential elections. Beltran said Ms Macapagal was now campaigning to be the United States' bet for the presidency in 2004.

"Why else this relentless campaign to assure the American troops that they're welcome in the Philippines? Arroyo is depending on the support of the White House because she feels her chances in 2004 are shaky," Beltran said.

At least 300 members of the Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya chanted "Yankees Out!" in front of the Clark main gate at about noon yesterday, and assailed Ms Macapagal for allowing the US to wage what they called "America's war of aggression."

In Nueva Ecija, at least 200 members of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and its allied organizations protested in front of Fort Magsaysay, where jungle warfare training will be held.

The protesters in Clark carried a billboard stating that US troops and the Balikatan exercises were not allowed in Philippine territory. The billboard was designed like a "No Parking" sign.

Officials of Bayan in Pampanga and other parts of Central Luzon vowed to hold daily protest actions from May 1 to 6, at Clark and in the provinces of Bulacan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

In Manila, two groups staged small protests outside the US Embassy, calling the maneuvers an infringement on Philippine sovereignty and claiming that American forces failed to clean up toxic waste when they pulled out of bases here.

Turnout was much smaller than for demonstrations when US troops began arriving in January.

Aggressor nation

The annual Balikatan joint military exercise traditionally assumes an attack by a hypothetical external aggressor nation. Guingona said this concept must be changed. Asked for specifics, Guingona told reporters that everything should be based on "national interests."

"The substance is what kind of training. As I said in my speech, there is the example of the poachers, the foreign ships that come here."

In his speech, Guingona pointed out that the Philippines has more water than land.

"The right to protect our waters is a sovereign right of the Philippines. We will have to exercise that right without having to antagonize other foreign nations," Guingona said.

"We are a maritime nation. Many poachers from foreign nations come to exploit our waters. They enter our seas and ravage marine life: our clams, corals and marine species. Because of ruthless poaching and plunder, the damage done to our marine life is estimated at $50 million a year," Guingona said.

Guingona said he was not merely referring to China and the Spratlys issue.

"The security to protect our waters is not only directed at China. Many nations are poaching on our waters. This is not limited to one nation," he explained.

Guingona said the waters should also be protected against pirates. ***With reports from Jun Malig, Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; AFP, AP***

No R&R for GIs in Laur

IN LAUR, Nueva Ecija, Army officials said soldiers participating in Balikatan 02-2 will spend their rest and recreation or R&R inside the military reservation in Fort Magsaysay.

Maj. Rhoderick Parayno, spokesperson of the Army's 7th Infantry Division and of Filipino soldiers involved in the military exercises in Fort Magsaysay, said a number of concessionaires inside the camp will provide soldiers with R&R opportunities, such as videoke singing and beer drinking.

But Parayno said the participants will actually have little time for R&R, because they will keep a tight schedule, with training exercises and lectures even at night.

Another military spokesperson, Major Elmer Quiros, said that the training in Luzon would focus on external defense and conventional warfare capabilities.

This is part of a "long-term training strategy so that in the next five years, we will be able to develop a joint task force, so that Filipino troops would be abreast with the present trend of international deployment like peacekeeping forces," Quiros said.

The second Balikatan exercise is expected to end May 6, with the last week devoted to civil operations ranging from construction projects to medical and dental clinics for local residents.

Representatives from 10 countries—Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore and Thailand—have been invited to observe the second exercise, but only four are expected to attend. ***Jun Malig, Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; and AP***

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Sin denies backing Copa 'junta'

From page A1

Margarita, is in Ms Macapagal's circle of assistants.

Saycon is the President's appointee to the board of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. as private-sector representative. When contacted by the INQUIRER, Saycon confirmed the meeting but denied plotting to oust Ms Macapagal.

"I am committed to peace," the cardinal said in a letter yesterday to Philippine Star columnist Teodoro Benigno, a copy of which was furnished the INQUIRER. "This is my whole life. I would be contradicting my work as a priest if I would espouse violence. I am happy with the way President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is leading the nation. It is not a perfect presidency, but I am happy with her performance."

According to Villegas, Copa claimed that both the leftists and rightists were out to destabilize the government and that it believed that a military junta would prevail.

A source close to Villegas said the President was already aware of the plot.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ms Macapagal phoned Fianza two days ago to find out what the Freedom Force was all about.

Fianza, Philippine National Police director for human resources and doctrine development, denied to the President that a coup plot was in the works, the source said.

"If Fianza is really the President's man, he should not have waited for (her) to call him," said the source, who had apprised Ms Macapagal of what transpired during the meeting between Sin and the Copa members.

According to the source, the President was angered that the Copa would assure her of its support when meeting with her but would be plotting behind her back.

The source also said Sin was concerned that Copa members might use his name in inviting various groups to join them.

Distortion

The source said Copa members were already saying yesterday that Freedom Force had the support of the cardinal, as well as 19 generals, the middle class, students and big business.

The source said Villegas was forced to disclose what happened at the Villa San Miguel meeting because the Copa was "distorting the truth."

Benigno wrote in his column yesterday that the cardinal had "lost no time" in approving the concept of "collective leadership" and "giving Freedom Force his blessing."

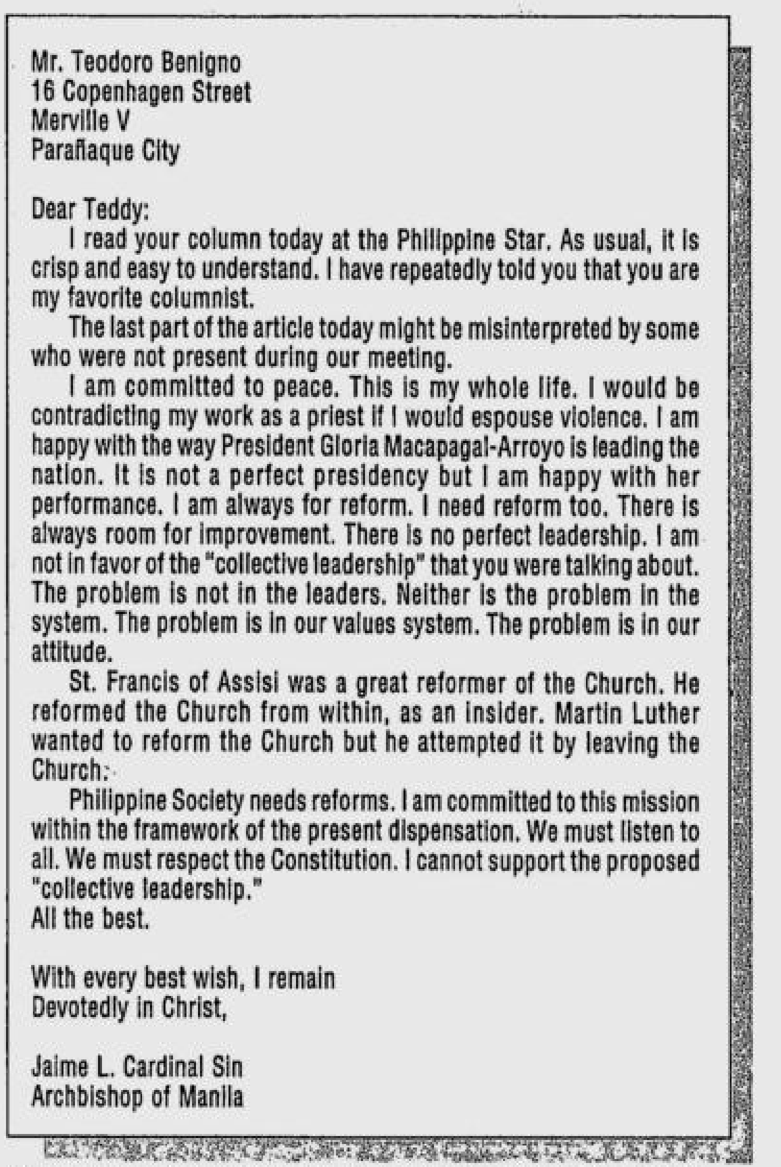
He said the cardinal was made to understand that he and his group would "only embark on our mission with (Sin's) and the Church's support."

"And he said yes, go ahead, we will be with you in your mission, your crusade," Benigno wrote.

But in his letter to Benigno, Sin said: "I am not in favor of the 'collective leadership' that you were talking about. The problem is not in the leaders. Neither is the problem in the system. The problem is in our values system. The problem is in our attitude."

Sin acknowledged that he was "always for reform." He said "there is always room for improvement" and "there is no perfect leadership."

"Philippine society needs reforms," the cardinal declared. "I am committed to this mission within the framework of the present dispensation. We must listen to all. We must respect the Constitution. We cannot support the supposed 'collective leadership.'"



Mr. Teodoro Benigno
16 Copenhagen Street
Merville V
Parañaque City

Dear Teddy:

I read your column today at the Philippine Star. As usual, it is crisp and easy to understand. I have repeatedly told you that you are my favorite columnist.

The last part of the article today might be misinterpreted by some who were not present during our meeting.

I am committed to peace. This is my whole life. I would be contradicting my work as a priest if I would espouse violence. I am happy with the way President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is leading the nation. It is not a perfect presidency but I am happy with her performance. I am always for reform. I need reform too. There is always room for improvement. There is no perfect leadership. I am not in favor of the "collective leadership" that you were talking about. The problem is not in the leaders. Neither is the problem in the system. The problem is in our values system. The problem is in our attitude.

St. Francis of Assisi was a great reformer of the Church. He reformed the Church from within, as an insider. Martin Luther wanted to reform the Church but he attempted it by leaving the Church.

Philippine Society needs reforms. I am committed to this mission within the framework of the present dispensation. We must listen to all. We must respect the Constitution. I cannot support the proposed "collective leadership."

All the best.

With every best wish, I remain
Devotedly in Christ,

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin
Archbishop of Manila

THE FULL text of Cardinal Sin's letter to columnist Teodoro Benigno

'In every Palestinian house . . . tears'

From page A1

defying Israeli orders to surrender.

"We can't leave the Bethlehem area until this issue is solved because the presence of our troops is what keeps up the pressure on those in the church," said Raanan Gissin, an adviser for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Palestinians in West Bank cities began to clean up and rebuild on the first day in three weeks without armed Israeli presence on the streets.

But roads have been chewed up by tank treads, and passing armor has shaved the edges off buildings on street corners. Holes gape in some walls. Lampposts are down. Cars are crumpled like tin cans. Streets are cluttered with concrete blocks, old tires, and garbage from overturned and crushed rubbish bins.

In the Gaza Strip, seven Palestinian children, including a 3-year-old, were wounded when Israeli troops fired on them as they were throwing stones Sunday, witnesses and medics said.

The children were lobbing stones at Israeli tanks and bulldozers trying to clear an area between the autonomous southern town of Rafah and the neighboring refugee camp close to the border with Egypt.

Witnesses said the soldiers opened fire with live bullets, hitting 3-year-old Ahmad Zaanoun in the head. Medics said his condition was critical.

The army said it had opened fire in self-defense. Witnesses said all the children were less than 15 years old.

Lost beauty

In a town once known for its beautiful houses and restaurants, residents and shopkeepers scurried to repair doors, walls and windows, blasted by the military.

Others gathered on the streets for long chats with friends they barely saw during the brief periods every three days when the curfew was lifted during the occupation.

Around them, the air was filled with the stench of rotten rubbish piled up on the pavements, themselves an obstacle course with the wrecks of cars crushed by tanks.

"You ask if I am happy. They took my freedom away. They should not have been here," said Mohammad, 32, picking his way through the debris in the street.

The six-story Natcheh building, a landmark in Ramallah filled with cafés, the French cultural center, salons and music stores, now stands a desolate wreck.

All its windows have been shot out, giving a clear view of the bullet-scarred walls and the devastation inside.

Hosni Atari, director of the Ramallah Government Hospital, said at least 37 people, mainly civilians, were killed during the three-week occupation.

"We know of 37 dead including two women and two children," he said. "Others with medical complaints died in the villages around Ramallah because the ambulances could not get to them. During the last 23 days people could not get to hospital except for short periods when the curfew was lifted."

Atari said "only about 30 percent" of those killed in Ramallah were Palestinian fighters. He said the rest were civilians.

At a fruit and vegetable market, Mahmud Havez, said that although the troops had gone, "I do not feel free in my heart."

"They say we are the terrorists, but my children have had no food for 20 days," he said.

Bullets

In the spartan wards of the hospital, Manassra, 23, recounted how soldiers shot his cousin Wasim, 22, who was visiting from Romania.

"We walked about 10 meters and stopped at a friend's house to see if we could get anything for his family," Manassra said. "As we were standing on the doorstep Wasim was shot from behind. The bullet went right through his liver."

Another neighbor who came out to investigate the source of the shooting was shot in the leg, he said.

In a side street, Intisar Bakr, 23, holding her 18-month-old son, showed the bullet holes in the front door of her home and in a bedroom, saying soldiers burst in and briefly took her husband.

"My baby was crying, and my 4-year-old son. We were afraid. They had rifles and told us to put our hands over our heads," she said.

Her husband Mohammed said he was questioned for two hours, blindfolded with his hands tied, before the soldiers were satisfied he was not a threat.

WHAT now? A woman and her son are framed by a hole punched in a house in what remains of the Jenin refugee camp. GETTY IMAGES

"We are so happy the soldiers have gone," Mohammed said as he worked to replace cupboard doors ripped off when soldiers searched his humble three-room home. "But maybe they will come back."

Booby traps

In Nablus, people moved warily to avoid booby traps set by Palestinian fighters in defense against the Israeli incursion, or fearing that the Israelis had left behind their own bombs.

Khaled Sabry, 35, stood outside one building to stop people from going in. "What we are doing right now is trying to convince civilians and shop owners not to enter the building before experts come and check that it's empty of booby traps. Nobody knows how far these people can go in harming Palestinians," he said.

The Nablus municipality said 80 percent of its low-tension electricity was knocked out and 200 electrical polls were toppled, 70 percent of its water network was damaged, up to 70 percent of the sewage system was destroyed, and more than half the roads were torn up.

Anan Jarwan, 32, removing the damaged door of his Nablus clothing shop, said the destruction of his business depressed him.

But he was determined to rebuild. "No, I can't leave here, it's my homeland and I will not leave," he said.

Tayseer Al-Juba, 30, who owns a stationary store in Ramallah, said he felt lucky to be alive.

But the bitterness is deep. "We have rivers of blood running between us," he said.

'We cannot forget'

In Washington, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Sunday that European leaders should remember how their ancestors treated Jews before judging Israel.

"We Jewish people cannot forget the past of Europe," Peres said in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a leading pro-Israeli political lobby group known as Aipac.

"Where in Europe there was anti-Semitism against the Jewish person, today I'm afraid there is anti-Semitism against the Jewish state," he said.

Earlier this month, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling for sanctions against Israel amid growing frustration over Sharon's iron-fisted crackdown on Palestinian militancy.

The European Union has also demanded an impartial international inquiry into what happened in the devastated Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank. International concern over the results of fighting in the camp has prompted the UN Security Council to order a fact-finding mission to the area.

But Peres said: "We were judged by rumors and not by facts." He drew a standing ovation as he vowed to challenge those rumors at a meeting starting Monday of EU foreign ministers and their Mediterranean rim counterparts in Valencia, Spain.

"I shall represent a lonely voice—your lonely voice, our lonely voice—but the right voice," Peres said. *AFP, AP*

After 3 weeks dog . . .

From page A1

ship Insiko on April 2 after the tanker was evacuated when fire broke aboard. The Norwegian cruise ship that rescued the Insiko's crew did not allow the captain to bring his dog, named Forgea, aboard the liner.

After it was reported that Forgea had been left aboard the tanker, the Hawaiian Humane Society quickly mounted a $50,000 rescue effort. But the air-and-sea search ended April 7 when the tanker could not be found.

The HSUS said members of the US Coast Guard spotted the dog running around the deck of the tanker on Saturday, dropped food down to it, and radioed for help.

The crew of a fishing vessel subsequently boarded the tanker to rescue the abandoned pooch, the HSUS said.

"It is nothing short of a miracle that Forgea was discovered and found alive," HSUS vice president and spokesperson Martha Armstrong said in a statement Sunday.

"For almost three weeks, Forgea has been fighting exposure and hunger, yet somehow she continued to survive," Armstrong said. "Forgea's chances of staying alive decreased every day that passed since the April 2 rescue of the Insiko crew. We never wanted to give up hope and Forgea showed us why. Her instinct to survive overcame the odds against her."

Armstrong said the crew of the fishing vessel planned to bring Forgea back to Honolulu with them when they return next week from fishing.

"They were trying to calm her down," she said. "She's been without company for 19 days, with several flyovers, and she's probably really excited."

Pamela Burns, president of the Hawaiian Humane Society, said the terrier was doing well. "It's walking and running around, but it's quite scared," she said.

Search

The Coast Guard had been searching for the Insiko to determine if it posed an environmental hazard to Johnston Island, about 1,327 kilometers southwest of Honolulu, Petty Officer David Mosley said.

The crew of the C130 spotted it 400 km east of Johnston, and the Coast Guard notified a salvage company.

The Insiko was disabled by a fatal fire on March 13 that killed one crewman and cut off power and communications.

A fishing vessel spotted the ship again April 12, and the Hawaiian Humane Society contacted another fishing boat in hopes of saving the dog. But the crew could not find the tanker.

After the spotting Saturday, Lt. j.g. Mia Dutcher said the Coast Guard reported the tanker's position to American Marine Corp., the salvage firm that the society had hired to find the Insiko and rescue the dog.

American Marine directed a fishing vessel and a tug and barge about 130 km away to go to the area, Dutcher said.

The captain of the ship and an injured crewman flew home to Taiwan on April 6. The uninjured seamen who were from China were put up in a hotel while awaiting transportation home. They hid from authorities for 10 days but later turned themselves in.

The US Coast Guard did not make an effort to track down the Insiko earlier because it was in international waters.

It was expected to take a day or two for the Coast Guard to analyze data to determine whether it will have to intervene to protect Johnston Island from potential harm posed by the tanker, Mosley said.

Johnston was the home of a US chemical weapons disposal facility for 10 years before operations ended in November 2000. The island has since been turned into a wildlife preserve.

"I don't think this will ever come up again," Burns said. "We do 600 rescues a year on Oahu and none this dramatic and certainly not as expensive. But we're certainly committed to rescuing animals." *AFP, AP*

₱2-M ransom paid but who's got the money?

From page A1

hope. For the first time we received a written ransom demand of $1 million. But knowing that we could not meet this, we kept silent. On Jan. 31, retired Gen. Orlando Soriano and some friends told us we should pursue the negotiations."

The ransom amount was later lowered. "They started to contact Jaafar, the second in command to Hashim Salamat (chief of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front). Jaafar was supposedly asking for P1 million for his group's (facilitation) services but the ransom demand of Abu Omar was really P5 million. We were again at a deadlock because we did not know how to respond to the demand."

About six weeks after Omar's package arrived, Jimenez received an important call.

Nokia cell phones

"On March 8, I got to talk over the phone to Kumander Ramjie who connected me to Kumander Abu Omar. Ramjie was very apologetic for not contacting me earlier. Abu Omar started to make demands. He asked for P500,000 for food and other needs, two 8890 Nokia cell phones, one Ericsson satellite phone and medicine for the priest. He spoke in Cebuano with an accent. I said, 'I will deal with you only if you have proof that Fr. Pierantoni is with you' and I wanted to talk to Pierantoni himself but they said he had no phone. They wanted us to give in to their demands first. I told them we were not giving ransom money. Or they could wait for those who might give them money. They never contacted me after that," Jimenez recalled.

"Around the third week of March, Soriano and some friends planned to go to Cotabato. The trip was postponed because of a storm. Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane of the PNP (and the National Anti-Crime Commission's Anti-Kidnapping Task Force) was this time facilitating the release. They were hopeful that the priest would be freed on Holy Tuesday, March 26. An Italian friend was supposed to have given P200,000 to Jaafar for his expenses to be deducted from the P5 million. Everybody, including Fr. Eliseo "Jun" Mercado, a good friend of the Muslims (and president of the Notre Dame College of Cotabato), was confident. Gen. Soriano, however, told Fr. Jerry Sheehy, the head of the SCJ (the Priests of the Sacred Heart, the order to which Pierantoni belongs) that Fr. Pierantoni was being held far from Cotabato so they could not go on with the negotiations. It seemed then that all the efforts were going to waste."

The release did not take place on Holy Tuesday.

"Fr. Sheehy called up to say that according to Soriano, the father of one of the kidnappers died that day and that according to tradition there would be no movements for seven days. We could not check out the veracity of all this."

Yakan caretakers

It was at this point, the bishop said, that PNP Chief Leandro Mendoza was supposed to have organized two special PNP forces to rescue the priest. It was not clear to the bishop how this was going to be done. "It could be by force or some other means. We only learned from the early morning broadcast of President Macapagal-Arroyo that Fr. Pierantoni was 'rescued' on April 7 (actually, at 2 a.m. on April 8) after fierce fighting. But I interviewed Fr. Pierantoni and he told me that he was simply brought near the highway where a van was waiting for him. There were no media people there. Three persons came out of the van and placed their arms around him."

Pierantoni later told GMA television that his release was "a deliberate hand-over."

Jimenez said he learned from Fr. Pierantoni that the hostage had been entrusted to some Yakan tribesmen who took care of him. This, Jimenez said, was what led him to believe that he was in Basilan and not in the hinterlands of Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay. During his 12-hour walk to freedom, Jimenez said, Pierantoni's caretakers gradually dropped out of sight as they neared the highway.

"During the long walk, Fr. Pierantoni was told by his escorts that 'it was almost over.' He offered his watch to them but they would not take it. Two sets of people were involved in his abduction: the planners who executed the plan and the caretakers. The latter were simple people. They kept telling him, 'Please do not escape or they (the planners) will kill us.' They were unlettered folk and during his captivity Fr. Pierantoni even wrote love letters for them for the women they were courting. He said they did not move around very much."

Jimenez had earlier told reporters that the kidnappers had kept the Italian priest in Tungawan during his six-month captivity. "He said there was no movement during his captivity," Jimenez had said then.

On the day Pierantoni was released, however, Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo, chief of the pursuit group Task Force Giuseppe, attributed the "rescue" to the information gathered following the arrest of Norhan Amil, alias Commander Ramsey, and three of his followers the Friday before.

"After interrogation and investigation, their statement helped in pinpointing the areas of the supposed hideouts," Atutubo had said then.

Protection money

On the night Pierantoni was recovered, he heard from Kumander Abu Omar all over again.

"He told me that in order to assure the safety of my priests, we should give (his group) protection money. I told him that paying protection money was against our ministry, that our lives are entrusted to the people we serve and paying protection money is against their own Holy Book, the Koran."

Bishop Jimenez does not know what happened to the P2 million or so in ransom payment inside the black bag that was snatched by armed men during the January negotiations somewhere near Cotabato City. His account raises some tantalizing questions. Who were the armed men who turned up that night and made off with the P2 million that allegedly came from a high-ranking male politician? Who was the true source of this money? Why did Omar wait so long before beginning negotiations? And were the emissaries in the earlier negotiations mere impostors?

Jimenez says that a letter from Fr. Pierantoni during the latter part of his captivity said that those who were holding him had realized their mistakes in the negotiation process, and that the people they trusted to negotiate for them never came back.

It may not have been as simple as that.

Marave keeps Formula A title; Peña prevails

CARMONA—Pepon Marave of Fotura Racing bucked a slow start to keep the premiere Formula A class title in the third leg of the 2002 Shell Karting Super Series yesterday at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Dado Pena and Michelle Bumgarner shared the limelight by pulling rousing wins in their respective divisions.

Actually, it was Moto's Allan Uy who topped the two qualifying heats of Formula A in the event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Casino Filipino, Bridgestone, ZED, Nokia and Coca-Cola Bottlers.

But Marave stamped his class in the final heat, pulling away with the fastest lap time of 43.143 on the fifth lap to control the tempo from thereon and finish the race in 18:47.218.

GP-Kart Plaza's Jinky Cabilinan clocked 18:51.563, just 4.345 behind Marave.

Tuason Racing-Team Oxygen's Mike Tuason settled for third with 18:53.131 while Uy and Mario Cunanan checked in fourth and fifth, respectively.

GS Superio hits Northern Luzon

RALLY aficionado Tony Mapa, a former tourist attaché based in New York, expressed satisfaction with the manner the Nissan Exalta GS Superio performed during the Northern Luzon trek Sunday in the fourth Pan Philippine Marathon.

He had to fly from his home in Basi City in Negros to test the 1.6-liter, 116-horsepower Exalta in the roads of Northern Luzon in the company of Willie Ingles, Andy Ferreira and Boy Fuentes.

Mapa had already tried the Exalta but he had yet to race in the Ilocos region.

"My decision to fly to test it (Exalta) was worth it," said Mapa, who drove from Solano, Nueva Ecija to Tuguegarao, Cagayan. "I was also able to see the fine tourist spots up north."

When the Ilocandia crew arrived at Nissan-Mantrade, the Caltex Havoline odometer had a reading of 17,914 kilometers. Ingles then turned over the keys headed by Javy Catajoy for the Exalta's return trip to the Visayas via Bicol.

Byrd who?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

HAVE you heard of Chris Byrd?

I guess not.

Byrd, from the United States, has been the No. 1 heavyweight contender in the International Boxing Federation for the last 12 months or so. He feels he has lost a shot of the IBF title this year because Lennox Lewis, the reigning IBF champion, has opted to defend his crown against Mike Tyson on June 8. Byrd now wants Lewis to be stripped of the title.

You are not that stupid as not to know the reason behind Lewis' move to bypass Byrd. Byrd is nondescript. Tyson, despite his bad boy image, remains a top draw. Boxing has always thrived on controversy. Tyson does not only eat controversies for breakfast; he also still packs a deadly wallop in his fists.

Lewis could be stripped of the IBF belt since his June 8 bout with Tyson is all set. Byrd will most likely fight the winner of the June 1 card between Evander Holyfield and Hasim Rahman.

Byrd has told the Agence France Presse: "I don't care who I fight, but I just want to fight because I have earned my right to a title shot. Lennox has promised me a fight later this year, if and when he beats Tyson—but I think he will retire and not meet me."

In boxing, nothing is certain. Win or lose, I don't think Lewis will retire. If the money's right, he will continue fighting. As I said, Tyson will continue to be an attraction. Tyson's only foe is himself. If he misbehaves so badly this time—he might bite Lewis' nose, who knows?—then I guess that will be the end of the line for him.

In the meantime, it will be worth Byrd's while if he instead earns a shot at Tyson.

For sure, Byrd's stock will rise to unimaginable heights.

Win or lose.

■

I've seen "Training Day," Denzel Washington's vehicle to win the Oscar for best actor of 2001.

As promised, here's my choice. Russell Crowe still. I find him unbeatable in "A Beautiful Mind" simply because in said film, he portrayed three characters with such telling force—as a lucid scientist, a schizophrenic and an old, graying fogey. The way he delivered his Nobel Prize speech alone was enough to make you cry.

I have yet to see "I Am Sam" starring Sean Penn. Penn was also nominated best actor. Based on the thriller of "I Am Sam" that I've seen thus far, I find Penn a worthy challenger. His role reminds me of Dustin Hoffman, essaying the role of an autistic, in "Rain Man."

Catch you later, fellas.

Athletes dorm to cost ₱30M, says Buhain

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said at least P30 million will be spent for the construction of the athletes' dormitories at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Buhain said the amount is based on the estimate of the battery of engineers from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation who have been visiting the RMSC three times a week for the past three weeks.

The PSC chair is also set to finalize the planned construction with officials of the Pagcor and National Housing Authority tomorrow at the office of Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino.

"We are really trying to finalize the construction of the dorms because our athletes really need a decent place to stay while training," said Buhain of the project, which he initiated just three months into his term as PSC chair.

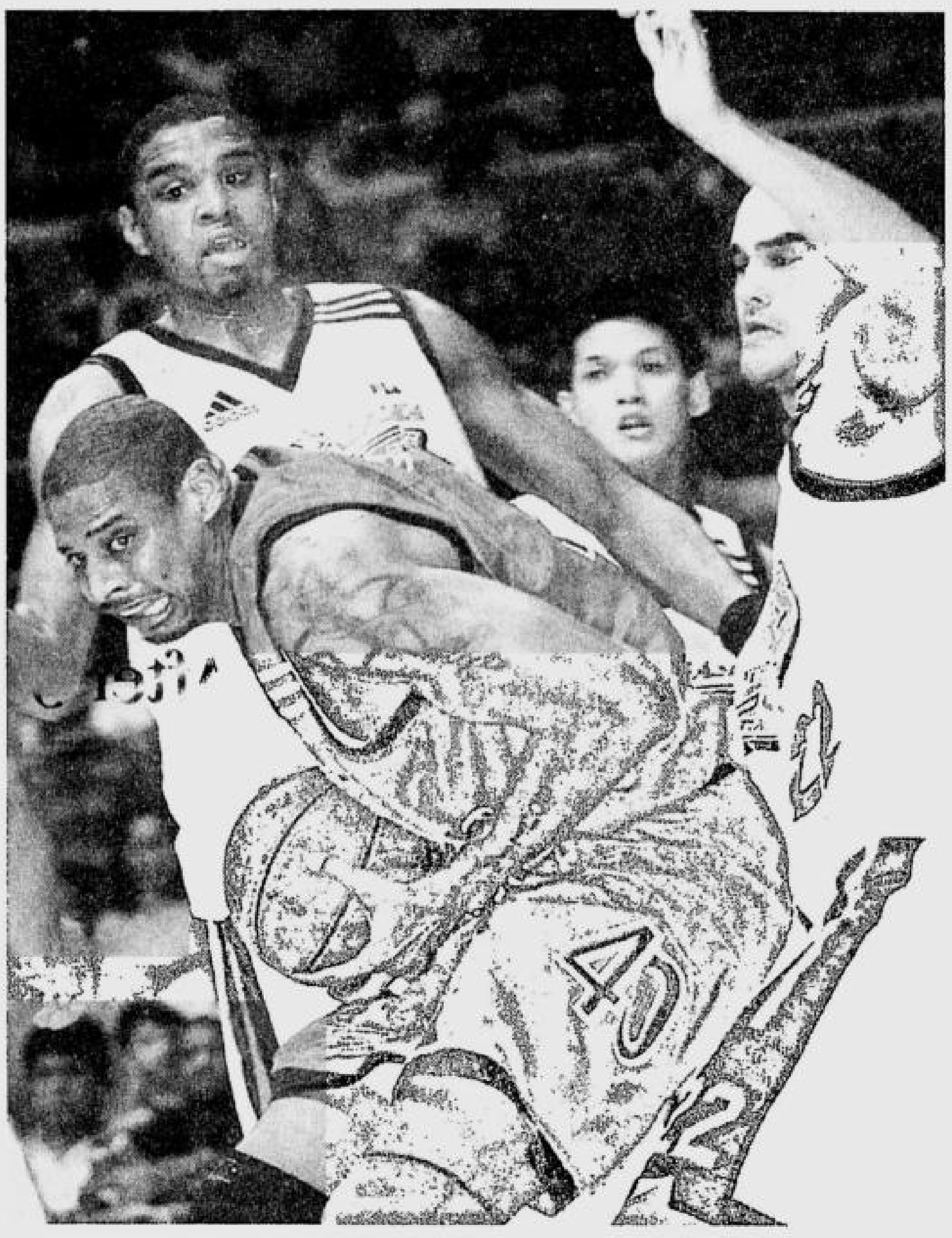
Buhain said the groundbreaking of the dormitories would certainly serve as a morale-booster for the 350 national athletes, especially those who are honing their skills for the Asian Games in Busan, South Korea.

He added that the planned dormitories would eventually erase the "sad image" of national athletes living in miserable conditions under the track oval or inside the decrepit RMSC north and south towers.

Although both the Pagcor and the NHA have "verbally" agreed to bankroll the project, Buhain said he will still lobby for a six-story building to house all the athletes now living in RMSC and the Ultra in Pasig.

'They initially planned to build a four-story dorm but I am trying to convince them to make it a six-story building instead," said Buhain.

However, planners are still trying to determine the construction spot, according to Buhain, although the venues being eyed are the open space between the Ninoy Aquino Stadium and the track oval, and the extra tennis courts behind the gymnastics center.



NO SURRENDER

San Miguel Beer's Mario Bennet (40) finds himself hounded by Alaska Milk's James Head (left), James Wallkvist (right) and Rodney Santos during their PBA Governors Cup tussle on Sunday. Alaska won, 74-58.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

LBC Batangas seeks 2nd win

By Roy Luarca

GAME TODAY
(CEU Centrodome, Malolos)
6 p.m.—Batangas vs Pampanga

LBC Batangas has gotten its bearings back and will try to stay that way when it tangles with Pampanga at 6 p.m. today when the MBA First Conference visits the Centro Escolar University Gym in Malolos, Bulacan.

The Blades, the reigning national titlists, bested the Osaka Pangasinan Waves, 92-83, on Sunday night to break into the win column after back-to-back losses.

That the Blades prevailed without Alex Compton, who is attending to his ailing father in the United States, proved that they couldn't be dismissed as title contenders despite a weaker roster this year.

Eddie Laure, last year's MVP, will again be the main man for coach Olsen Racela's charges if Compton doesn't arrive on time for the game.

Laure scored 24 points and grabbed 17 rebounds as the Blades spoiled the 25th birthday of their former teammate and 2000 MVP Romel Adducul.

The Stars are reeling from a 94-75 beating dealt them by the Olongapo Volunteers on Sunday and, with a 1-win, 4-loss record, are hard pressed to get back on track.

Cebuana Lhuillier and Casino Cagayan de Oro are still battling at presstime at the Cebu Coliseum.

Meanwhile, RCPI Negros' Jose Francisco was named Hardcourt Hero by the MBA Press Corps for the period April 16-21. Francisco scored a team-high 25 points, including six triples, as the Slashers handed the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems a 96-91 loss at the Cebu Coliseum on Saturday.

Mindanao kitefest ends

CAGAYAN de Oro City—Eight more colorful and attractive kites joined the list of winners in the Bear Brand Kitefest 2002, which concluded its eighth stop in this progressive city in the hearts of Mindanao on April 14.

Doods Balazo's "Red Killer Vampire" and Juniel Lugod's "Flying Fish" caught the attention of thousands of kite-flying enthusiasts and emerged as runaway winners in the adult and college figure kite categories, respectively.

Balazo won over Edgar Ydemme's "Penguin" and Rueld Aratia's "Dinosaur Raptor," while Lugod made it over Alsbro Nalilia's "European Drago Kite" and John Mark Bajas' "Iguana."

Both Balazo and Lugod brought home cash prizes of P6,000, trophy and gift packs from Nestle Philippines Inc., which is sponsoring the event as part of its efforts to promote worthwhile activities for the whole family during summer.

Manila Amateur golf tees off at Wack Wack

FLORO

IN a course where a deft short game can be a better weapon than power off the tee, the big guns should expect a sustained assault from all corners as the inaugural Manila Amateur golf championship tees off today at Wack Wack west.

Though big names like Angelo Que, Juvic Pagunsan and Marlon Dizon are given top billing, anybody from among the 40 players in the championship class who can putt and save strokes around the green can easily muddle up the title race.

"There is no such thing as familiarity with the course here. I think it's a wide-open race and it's a good opportunity for us to play at competitive level," said Dizon, a Wack Wack member who won the national stroke play crown earlier in the year.

Que, the reigning national champ who had kept himself in shape by playing in member-guests events, is in for a major test as the same guys who had challenged his bid to dominate are in the star-studded pairings.

Foremost among them are reigning SEA Games champ Juvic Pagunsan, Jherome Delariarte, Cookie LaO, Artemio Murakami and Tommy Manotoc. Also seen to crowd them for the crown are veterans Juami Rocha, Abe Rosal, JR Tanpinco, Dave Hernandez, Jun Bernis, and Jingy Tuason.

The first two days will be confined to the championship bets playing 72 holes. On Thursday and Friday will be the 36-hole gross play battles in Classes A, B and C and the two senior divisions.

Tournament director Bones Floro said that with the high quality field, the existing course record of 67 set by pro Danny Zarate in Jan. 23, 1999 may be broken.

Ordinario, Sta. Maria overall champs

OSCAR Ordinario and Billy Sta. Maria made their charge at the tough Dye course in a weekend of low scoring to capture the overall title in the Mizuno-sponsored Eagle Ridge Invitational golf tournament by a mere point recently.

Ordinario and Sta. Maria, both Quezon City residents, conspired for a best-ball 71 points at the Dye course that went with their 67 at the Faldo side earlier for a 138 total—equivalent to a whopping 30-under par.

But that could only give them a one-point victory as Eduard Tacolod and Rodrigo Gatmaitan tallied 66 (Dye) and 71 (Faldo) for 137. They settled for Class B honors, winning by five over Modesto Tolentino and Emil Alviar.

The competitions in the other divisions were tight with Al quitangon and Joseph Tambunting claiming the Class A crown, Ryan Amistad and Ramon Villareal copping the Class C title and Korean expats Keum Ja Lee and Sung Shin Lee topping the ladies division.

Aside from Mizuno through local distributor Master Sports Inc. headed by Lovell Gopez, other major sponsors are Radycon, Unirock, GG&A Club Development and Golforce Inc. Hole sponsors are Kart Plaza Manufacturing, Citibank, Club Consultancy, Mandarin Oriental, Microtel and Golf Library.

CHAMPION HORSE

PCSO Vice Chair and General Manager Virgilio R. Angelo (second from left) awards the PCSO Grand Championship Race trophy to horse owner Jose Francis Gonzalez following the impressive victory of his horse Unbreakable in the featured P1-Million classic on Sunday at the Santa Ana Park. Joining the festivities were (from left) Philracom Chair Andrew Sanchez, PCSO Committee on Races Vice Chair Vicente Manalad, PCSO Committee on Races Chair Jose Malang and PRCI EVP and COO Ramon Ereñeta Jr.

SPORTSWATCH

LGBA 6-cock derby today

MANDALUYONG Coliseum presents another superb cockfighting showdown featuring Luzon breeders, with the staging of LGBA 2nd Cockfighting Conference 6-Cock Derby today. The top 10 in the LGBA Gamecock Breeder of the Year race are Joseph and Peter Chua/Romero Yu (Jopete Ray Showdown, 5.5 points), OPMI president Vic Yu and Rey Lee (Pitmaster, 5.5), lawyers Virgilio Manguera, Mario Antonio and Justice Magdangal Elma (M2 Chito, 5), Ricky Castillo (E-68 11,5), V. Yu (Mandaluyong Coliseum, 5); Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco (CAT Stinger, 4.5), Tony Galang/William Go (ARGGA Gold Cup, 4.5), Dong Chung (5th of May Gold Cup, 4), Romy Tan (Jopete Black Stallion, 4) and former congressman Amado Bagatsing (Gladiator Air, 3.5).

Villarete enters tennis q'finals

BOYS' 14-under top seed Raymond Villarete of La Salle-Greenhills marched into the quarterfinals following a 6-0, 6-2 victory over Nico Katigbak yesterday in the start of the Luis Hilado Memorial Cup tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Villarete will next face Ivan Joshua Manalo, who rallied past Ogie Reynoso, 6-2, 1-6, 6-4. In other matches, Daniel Macalino of Ateneo defeated Gerard Ngo, 6-3, 6-2, to advance against Gerardo Narvaez, who beat Jose Mari Altiche, 6-2, 7-6 (3). Juan Felipe Mayor of Aklan whipped Abraham Bergado, 6-0, 6-0, and Patrick Arevalo of Ilocos Norte over Raymarc Santiago, 6-4, 6-1, to earn quarterfinal slots in this group 2 event supported by Dunlop balls.

Leonard cops WorldCom title

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina—Justin Leonard closed with a 2-over 73 Sunday for a 14-under 270 total, a stroke ahead of Heath Slocum and two in front of Phil Mickelson, to win the WorldCom Classic, a feat even he considered unlikely just days ago. Slocum had a 70 and Mickelson a 71. Leonard set a 54-hole scoring record this week with rounds of 67, 64 and 66 at Harbour Town Golf Links. And when playing partner Cameron Beckman double-bogeyed the par-4 third Sunday, Leonard was ahead by four shots on the field. *AP*

Kerr earns first LPGA Tour title

LINCOLN, California—Cristie Kerr won the Longs Drugs Challenge on Sunday for her first LPGA Tour title, taking advantage of Hee-Won Han's final-hole bogey on the 18th hole when she hooked her tee shot into the glove compartment of a golf cart. Kerr, in her sixth full season on the tour at age 24, squandered a five-stroke lead before parring the 18th hole for a 3-over-par 75 and one-stroke victory over Han, who shot a 70. Kerr finished with an 8-under 280 total on the demanding Twelve Bridges course. She earned $135,000 to move into second place on the money list with $295,606. Annika Sorenstam, who skipped the tournament, tops the list with $563,330. *AP*

Unseeded tops Family Circle

CHARLESTON, South Carolina—Iva Majoli of Croatia became the lowest ranked player to win a top-tier tournament when she defeated Swiss Patty Schnyder 7-6 (5), 6-4 Sunday for the championship of the Family Circle Cup, her first singles title since the 1997 French Open. The match was also the first top tier women's final featuring two unseeded players, with Majoli ranked 58th in the world and Schnyder 30th. Majoli also became the first unseeded player to win the Family Circle Cup, earning $182,000 in the $1.2 million tournament at the Tennis Center at Daniel Island. Majoli had missed almost a year on the tour after undergoing shoulder surgery in 1999. "It's been a great week. I mean, it feels so good to win again after like a couple of years," Majoli said. *AP*

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SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs, First Round – Indiana vs New Jersey, Game 2 at 7 a.m. (r – 3:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN

TENNIS: Masters Series (Monte-Carlo), Men's Final at 9:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

GOLF: LPGA - The Office Depot, Second Round at 10 a.m. (r) on ESPN

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◎ *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

San Miguel faces acid test in Talk N Text quint today

GAME TODAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
6 p.m.—Talk N Text vs San Miguel Beer *(Quarterfinals)*

By June Navarro

TALK N TEXT will spend one of two opportunities to book a semifinal ticket when it faces San Miguel Beer at the start of the PBA Samsung Governors Cup quarterfinals today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Brandishing a twice-to-beat edge after finishing the eliminations on top of the heap, the Phone Pals possess minimal advantage against the Beermen on their 6 p.m. playoff confrontation.

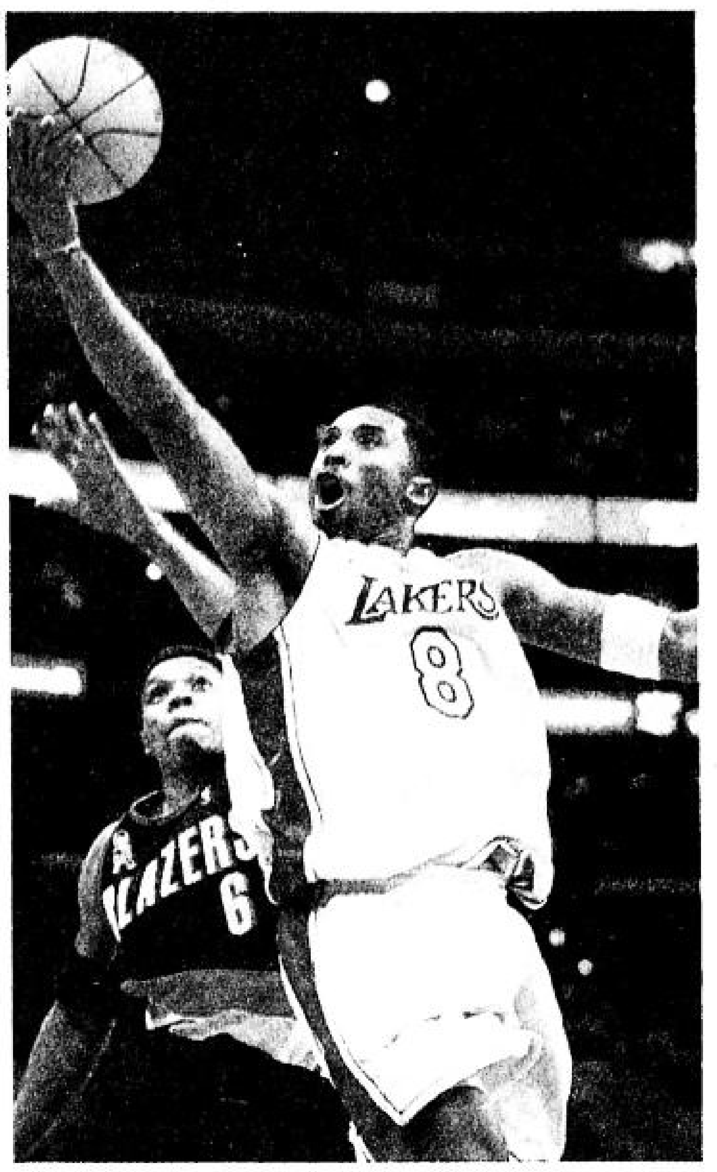
During their lone collision almost two months ago, the Phone Pals went through the proverbial eye of the needle and had to lean on Elmer Lago's torrid outside shooting before squeezing past the Beermen, 82-81.

Another compelling reason that points to a down-the-wire battle is, the eighth-seeded Beermen are more than capable of matching up against the Phone Pals as far as manpower is concerned.

Gerald Honeycutt, the fulcrum on which the offensive might of the Phone Pals stands, will have his hands full against the 6-foot-9 Mario Bennett, the tallest import so far this conference.

The hot-shooting Richie Frahm and Lamont Strothers of San Miguel are expected to cancel each other out, leaving Victor Pablo, Mark Telan and Kenny Evans the immense job of neutralizing the Beermen's backcourt.

"To beat a team like San Miguel we have to play very hard because they could match up with us in terms of talent and speed," said Talk N Text headcoach Bill Bayno, who steered the Phone Pals to nine victories against two setbacks at the end of eliminations.



KOBE'S KING AP

Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant (right) drives to the basket as Portland Trail Blazers' Bonzi Wells defends in the fourth quarter of the opener of their best-of-five first-round Western Conference playoff series in Los Angeles yesterday. Bryant scored 34 points as the Lakers defeated the Trail Blazers 95-87. In another West encounter, Dallas beat Minnesota, 101-94. In the East, Boston downed Philadelphia, 92-82, while Detroit thrashed Toronto, 85-63.

Kutitap repulses John-O-Juzz, 84-77

GAMES TOMORROW *(Makati Coliseum)*
4 p.m.—Shark Energy vs Ana Freezers
6 p.m.—Ateneo vs ICTSI-La Salle

By Dennis U. Eroa

PLAYMAKER Ryan Dy and high-leaping Cyrus Baguio formed a deadly combination as Kutitap Toothpaste turned back John-O-Juzz, 84-77, forcing a two-way tie for the lead yesterday in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Pasig Sports Complex.

Left open by the Juzzers, the unheralded Dy nailed a triple and Baguio made it 81-77 with a towering layup, barely a minute remaining.

The win gave coach Koy Banal's charges a 4-1 card in a tie with ICTSI-La Salle.

John-O-Juzz tasted its second loss in six games.

"I give credit to the boys for playing a tight defense especially in the endgame," said Banal after the Sparklers held their foes scoreless in the last two minutes.

The Juzzers hastened their own downfall when Archen Cayabyab, Arnold Booker and Froilan Baguion missed their shots in the ensuing plays.

Just like in their past games, the Juzzers trailed most of the way against the Sparklers. But Mico Santos, Ranidel de Ocampo, Bong Salvador and Jeff Napa spearheaded a blazing rally which saw them threaten at 77-79, two minutes left.

Kutitap, however, did not lose heart. With the 5-foot-8 Dy orchestrating plays, the Juzzers did not hurry up things, a trait that the Sparklers lacked.

In the second game, Blu Sun Power outlasted skidding Montaña Jewels, 81-75 for its second win in five outings. Montaña dropped to 1-4.

KUTITAP 84—Baguio 17, Salangsang 16, Dy 12, Mercado 9, Gelig 7, Jones 7, Espiritu 7, Saquilayan 6, Natividad 3, Rivera 0.

JOHN-O-JUZZ 77—Santos 14, De Ocampo 13, Napa 11, Barbosa 7, Neo 6, Cayabyab 5, Baguion 5, Grijaldo 5, Salvador 4, Booker 4, Ferrer 3, Olaguer 0, Tolentino 0.

Quarters: 22-19,47-44,70-61, 84-77

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Fr. Martin Cup: Ateneo, Mapua, SBC win

CRACK UAAP and NCAA teams hurdled their respective senior assignments as the 8th Fr. Martin Cup basketball tournament unwrapped recently in three separate venues.

Ateneo's A squad blasted University of Northern Philippines, 71-48, at Arellano gym to pace the early Group A winners, while reigning NCAA titlist San Sebastian toppled TIP, 81-64, at FEU gym to lead other Group C victors.

The other early senior winners were Adamson, Mapua and San Beda B in Group A, National University, Angelicum and University of the East in Group C and Pampanga's Assumption University in Group B.

Adamson downed UP, 59-55; Mapua beat University of Northern Philippines, 79-68; San Beda B crushed UNP, 109-59; NU nipped Philippine Christian University, 70-68; Angelicum edged FEU B, 64-63; UE walked over St. Claire; and Assumption outsteadied Ateneo B, 69-66.

Adamson's belles pulled an early shocker in the women's division by downing defending champion UP in overtime, 85-79, in an exciting match at FEU gym Thursday. The Lady Maroons came back three days later to whip University of Asia & Pacific, 80-14.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Frankie Miñoza beat Japanese Teruo Sugihara in a playoff to rule the Dunlop Open golf tournament in Japan. Also today in 1990, Tonito Payumo defeated Michael Misa, 6-2, 6-3, to bag the boys' 18-and-under division title of the Puma-Penn national age-group tennis championship at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

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METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Jancom willing to cut tipping fee, says MMDA

By Alcuin Papa

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority yesterday said the garbage contractor Jancom is willing to reduce its tipping fee from $32 to around $19 per ton of collected garbage.

In a news conference yesterday, MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said he personally asked Jancom president Leonides Gonzales during an interview on television the other night whether Jancom is willing to amend the garbage contract and reduce the company's tipping fee.

"They already agreed to downscale the project," Abalos said.

The MMDA and local government units are required to give the garbage contractor a tipping fee for every ton of garbage the contractor manages to process.

Abalos explained that Jancom's original offer of $59 was too expensive. Even Jancom's latest offer of $32 still proved too much, he said.

"We can't afford that (both figures)," Abalos said. "Where will we get the money? We can't do away with our other priorities. Why $32, when there was a bid for $19?"

The firm's officials earlier told the Inquirer that, considering the technology Jancom will use to treat waste, they "will not be able to make do with $19."

Aside from that, the contract stipulates additional charges that will "add more to the original tipping fee," amounting to $90 per ton.

Abalos said he imposed two conditions before the MMDA and Jancom could talk about downscaling the project.

First, Abalos said there must be a reduction in the components of the project.

"It's like buying a car," Abalos said. "You can opt to exclude some parts to reduce the price."

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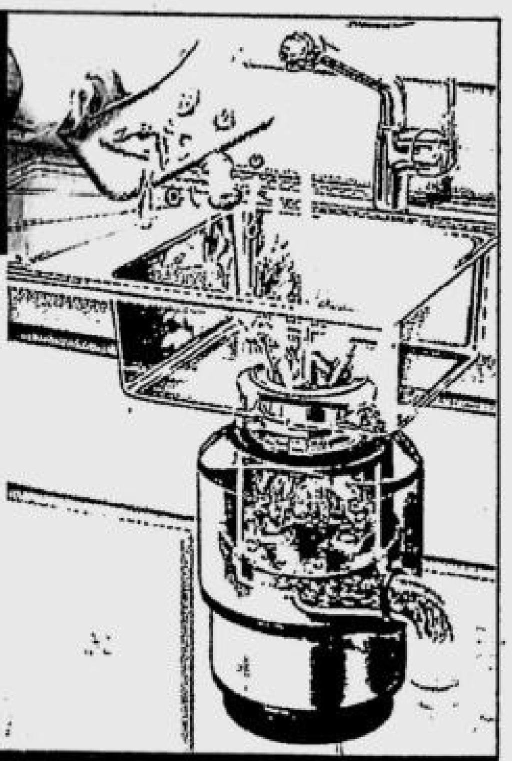

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Court awards RP to 'prince'

By Agnes E. Donato

THE PHILIPPINES, according to a court ruling, is owned by just one person, and it's not any of the Marcoses.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte called the attention of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to a ruling of the Pasay City court which awarded the Philippine archipelago to a Prince Julian Tallano.

Belmonte pointed this out after a representative of Tallano went to the mayor's office showing titles that said the prince owned Quezon City.

"The (court) decision purportedly showed that the Republic of the Philippines, represented by the Solicitor General, 'waived its rights' over the...land," Belmonte said in a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"(The decision's) execution would have an unsettling effect on the Torrens System of land registration, embolden land titling syndicates and spawn multiple litigations."

Tallano claimed he descended from a King Luisong Tagean whose sons included Rajah Soliman and Lapu-Lapu. The Philippines, he said, was a grant from the British government to Tallano's "royal ancestor" for his help in conquering the Philippine Islands in the 1700s.

Tallano's party claimed that in February 1972, then Court of First Instance Judge Enrique Agana issued a decision recognizing Tallano's claim to the Philippines.

Records of the decision were among the documents destroyed in a fire that gutted the Pasay City Hall in Janury 1992 and the Pasay City Regional Trial Court had to reconstitute the case, according to Tallano's representative.

The reconstitution was made in July 2001 and became "final and executory" on Nov. 7, 2001, the claimant said.

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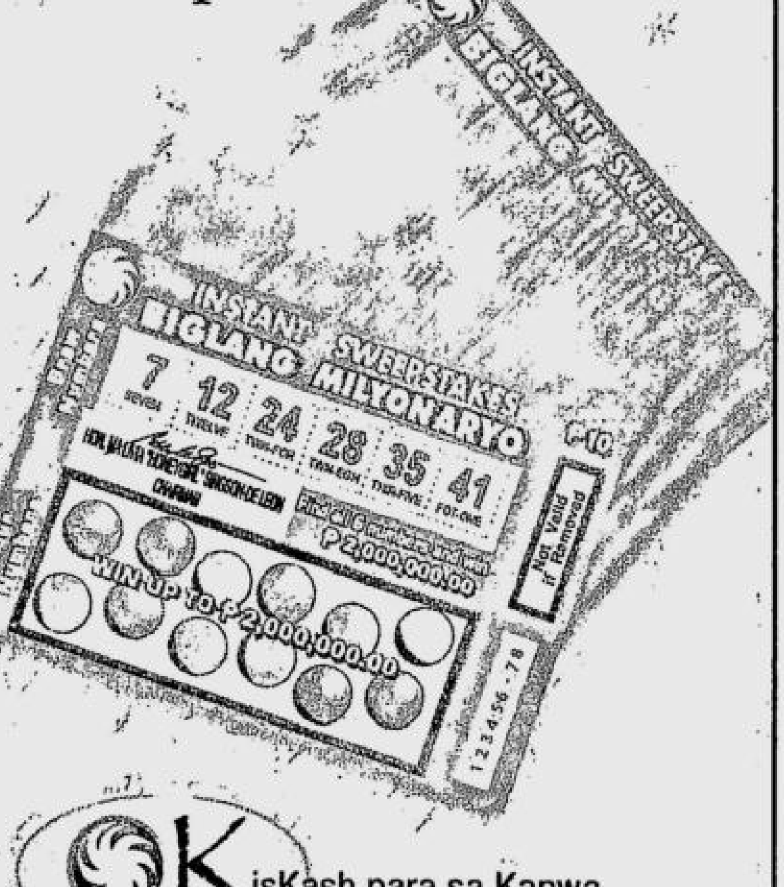

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The brave Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

JOSEPH "Erap" Estrada, a has-been actor who became president but was ousted by a Catholic Church-backed revolt, celebrated his 65th birthday last Friday.

His favorite song, "Kahit na Magtiis," was played over the airwaves by pro-Erap radio commentators again and again. The song tells of how the singer has to bear the sufferings that have come his way.

Only citizens ignorant of how he debauched the presidency would have been touched by Erap's appeal to the emotions through that song.

***

Erap never thought of the welfare of the poor people who sent him to Malacañang. He thought only of stuffing himself and satisfying his baser instincts.

He drank expensive wine (costing from P60,000 to P120,000 a bottle) with his cronies until the wee hours of the morning. He became a stud, albeit a tired, old stud. Using his power, he stole millions from the people he was supposed to serve.

Erap, *dapat ka lang magtiis dahil sa ginawa mo noon!*

***

Erap reminds us of a South American president, (Chidambaram) who was deposed by his constituents after they realized he was fooling around and not performing the functions of his office.

This former South American president was very much like Erap. Both won the highest office of their countries because the poor, who comprise the majority of the voting population, loved their foolish antics.

The deposed South American president was called "El Loco" (The Cuckoo) by his Spanish-speaking constituents. Erap should be called "Ang Gago."

***

I can't help printing out this new Erap joke (I promise this would be the last) to mark his 65th birthday last Friday.

Erap: *Hoy, Jinggoy, nakakamatay na pala ngayon ang pagong!*

Jinggoy: *Bakit po,* Daddy?

Erap then shows his son the current issue of a tabloid. The tabloid headline reads: Car turns turtle; 4 killed.

***

I found the above "corny" joke in one of the text messages recently.

But some jokes are not funny or corny, they're downright malicious.

If you receive bad news about some persons you know in your text messages, don't believe it outright. Check and cross-check the report you got. It might have been fabricated by his enemies to destroy his reputation. The report might also have been made up to make his friends and relatives worry.

***

Last Thursday, I had my hands full answering calls on my cellular phone from my relatives and friends.

Sounding worried, they asked whether I was okay.

A text message circulated saying that I was killed in an ambush.

***

What's the moral of the story?

Don't believe rumor or gossip you read in your text messages. Most of them are hogwash.

Remember the report about the death of the Pope? That started from a text message!

***

I doff my hat to Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez for taking on the doyen (*kuno*) of newspaper publishers, Emilio Yap.

Yap is respected by most politicians and top government officials because he owns the Manila Bulletin, the country's second largest newspaper (next to you know what). He uses his newspaper to kowtow to the powers that be instead of watch over their shoulders.

Even the mighty Supreme Court defers to Yap. A few years ago, it ruled in his favor in snatching away from a Malaysian investor the ownership of the Manila Hotel. The Malaysian investor had won in the bidding in the sale by the government of the historic hotel to the private sector. The high court didn't want to offend the government-friendly Yap. The court thought he might unleash his powerful weapon against it.

***

Now comes Gonzalez who is questioning Yap's refusal to pay the P600-million loan extended by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to Yap's Manila Hotel.

GSIS General Manager Winston Garcia tried to collect payment from the Chinese newspaper publisher.

But the "imperious Yap refused to pay," Garcia said.

Gonzalez is either very naïve or very courageous to challenge the might of Emilio Yap.

***

Yap is known in government circles as one who uses his powerful newspaper to soft-soap powerful officials through favorable publicity in his newspaper. But he sometimes uses the Manila Bulletin to destroy the reputations of government officials who refuse his hand of friendship.

Ask any Bulletin columnist and editor. They'll tell you—in secret, of course—that Yap is very harsh on columnists and reporters who criticize the government. Many columnists were deprived of their columns for being critical to the powers that be. He maintains that the Bulletin is a government mouthpiece.

If Yap can be hard on his disobedient subordinates at the Bulletin, he can be hard on uncooperative officials like Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez.

WPP guard suspended for rape

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday suspended a security officer of the government's Witness Protection Program (WPP) who was accused of raping a government witness on March 26.

"I have already suspended WPP security officer Gerry Lintan," Perez said during a press briefing. "The preventive suspension is effective immediately."

Perez said the suspension was necessary pending the results of the investigation being conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

He ruled out a pardon or lighter penalty for Lintan, alias Rustom Yap, saying "if there is rape, it can't be forgotten."

Perez also ordered an examination of all WPP security officers who are guarding vital government witnesses in several safehouses across the country.

"I have ordered WPP (chief Leo Dacera) to subject all guards to greater scrutiny," the justice head said. "They must pass a test showing that they can be trusted with the lives of the witnesses."

He said the victim, a 29-year-old housewife, is now safe with her family in the province.

On April 19, the witness sought the help of Dante Jimenez, chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), and accused Lintan of raping her in a Quezon City safehouse on March 26.

The complainant is a witness in the murder of a relative over a land dispute in 2000.

She and her family were placed under the DOJ's WPP when two armed men abducted and threatened her. She was later freed in Tarlac.

She said the rape happened in an apartment where she, another witness, and their families were being housed.

She said she went downstairs to wash her daughter's feeding bottle when Lintan embraced and punched her before dragging her into a room. He pushed her to a bed and raped her, she said.

She said Lintan attempted to rape her again two days later while she was leaving the bathroom. This time he did not succeed because she was able to grab a kitchen knife to ward him off, she said.

She said she left the protection program on April 2 after Dacera failed to immediately act on her complaint.

The witness, her husband and their 4-year-old daughter moved to a small apartment after the incidents.

But DOJ public information chief Monica Pagunsan said the WPP coverage of the witness and her family was terminated as early as March 8 because there was no imminent threat to the life of the witness.

"This is a case where a safehouse becomes a house of danger, where a witness is harmed than protected," said Jimenez of VACC.

He urged Perez and Dacera to evaluate the protection program and sack erring security officers.

Polluters of Pasig River face charges

By Alcuin Papa
and Gerald G. Lacuarta

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos warned that he would file charges against polluters of the Pasig River.

Abalos made the warning yesterday, World Earth Day, even as nongovernment organizations bestowed the "Lason ng Pasig awards" to 11 commercial and industrial firms blamed for polluting the river.

Abalos said in a news conference that he would secure from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources a list of companies who are polluting the river, "and we will file the necessary complaints against them."

Abalos is also chair of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

The DENR reportedly has compiled a list of polluters but has not filed any charges against them.

Abalos said he has relocated some informal settlers or squatters from along the river to avoid more pollution, but they keep coming back.

Also yesterday, the Sagip Pasig Movement, a coalition of 222 organizations, urged the public to boycott the products of the polluting firms until they have fully complied with environmental standards.

The recipients of the mock awards are Andok's Litson Manok in Quezon City, Zest-O Corp. in Quezon City, Savory Restaurant in Manila, Dealco Farms slaughterhouse in Manila, Universal Robina Corp. corn products division in Pasig City, Macro Funders Development Corp. in Mandaluyong, Concord Scientific and Chemical Corp. in Quezon City, Manila Plating Co. in Mandaluyong, Philippine Association of Hog Raisers in Taguig, Superior Box Inc. in Quezon City, and Versa Metal Industry in Mandaluyong.

The Sagip-Pasig Movement gives out the Lason ng Pasig (Poison of Pasig) awards every year to industrial firms it identifies as major polluters of the ailing Pasig River. Yesterday's awarding was held at the Barangay Barangka Ilaya River Park in Makati City.

The SPM said the polluters were ranked according to the levels of biochemical oxygen demand, the same parameter used by the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the DENR to determine the quality of a firm's waste water.

The other determinants used are suspended solids, acidity/alkalinity, and the presence of oil and grease. The SPM said this year's Lason recipients exceeded the legal and tolerable limits set by the LLDA and the DENR.

DENR studies have shown that industrial firms contribute heavily to the degradation of the Pasig River, accounting for 45 percent of the river's total pollution load.

SPM advocacy officer Sheila Tangco said the Lason ng Pasig awards were conceived in 1994 to raise public awareness of river pollution and rehabilitation and to debunk notions that riverside communities were mainly to blame for the present state of the Pasig River.

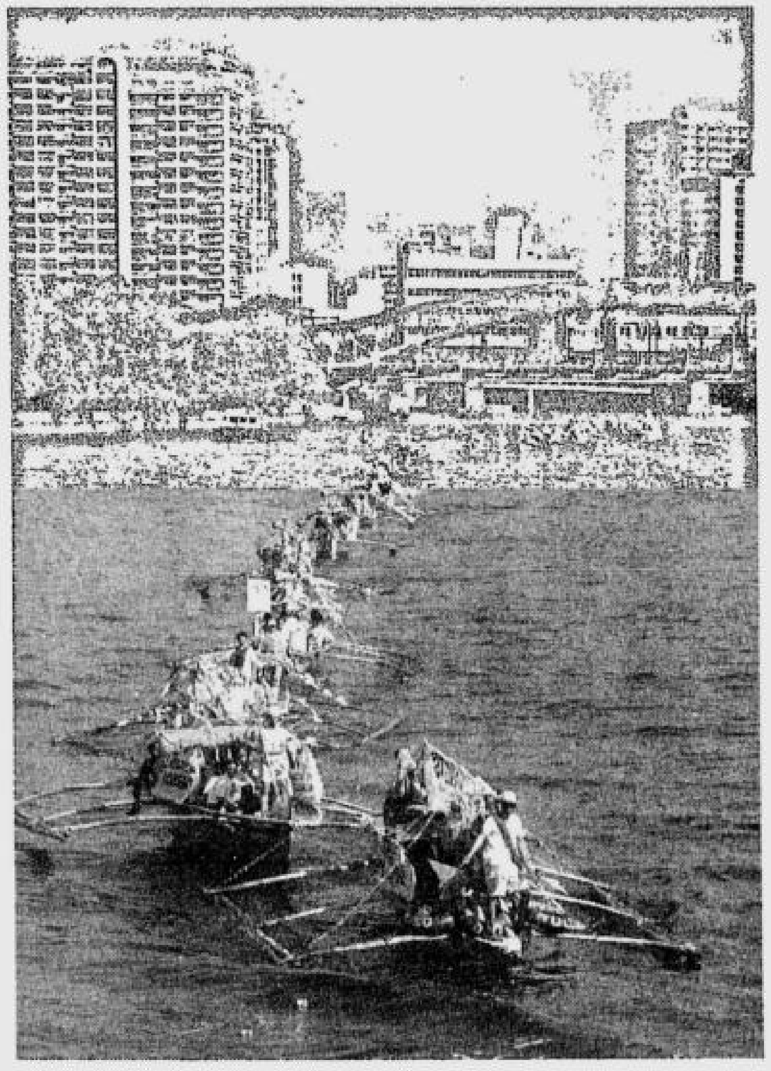
Another environmental group, the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (Cocap), called on the government to implement Republic Act No. 9003 of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2001, the first law signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Cocap founder Ester de Tagle said that until now, Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) have not been put up in every barangay or cluster of barangays as mandated by RA 9003.

De Tagle said putting up MRFs in all Metro Manila barangays will cost the city and municipal governments only P1.125 billion at P500,000 per MRF, compared to the $350 million that taxpayers have to shoulder for a proposed incinerator to be built by Jancom Environment Corp.

"If the barangays cluster themselves for one recycling center, which is allowed by law, the amount would be much less," De Tagle said.

De Tagle said MRFs are the cheapest and most effective way to solve the garbage problem. It requires no expensive hi-tech machines, the most expensive machine needed being the composter which costs P120,00 for a small barangay.



FLUVIAL parade in the "poisoned" Pasig River marks World Earth Day.

ERIK ARAZAS

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, April 23, 2002
4th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 11:19-26**
Gospel: **Jn 10:22-30**

The time came for the feast of the Dedication. It was winter and Jesus walked back and forth in the portico of Solomon. The Jews then gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in doubt? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have already told you but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name proclaim who I am, but you don't believe because, as I said, you are not my sheep.

My sheep hear my voice and I know them; they follow me and I give them eternal life. They shall never perish and no one will ever steal them from me. What the Father has given me is stronger than everything and no one can snatch it from the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

Commentary

The Jesus we meditate on in the gospels is both the human being who walked this earth for thirty some years in a particular time and place, in his humanness revealing God; and the Risen Lord, who is present to everyone at all times, everywhere, on earth as in heaven. Both aspects are in today's gospel: Jesus walks up and down in the temple portico of Solomon, a particular season, a particular day; while his words, "The Father and I are one" give us the transcendent, timeless dimension, the divine Son who is of one being with the Father. The issue of faith still fascinates. Whence springs that purity of heart, that deep trust, bonding the believer and Christ? "My sheep hear my voice and I know them." We find Christ when we allow ourselves to be known, letting go of the need to pretend or hide.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Burden of proof in civil cases—Burden of proof is the duty of a party to present evidence to establish his claim or defense by the amount of evidence required by law, which is preponderance of evidence in civil cases. The party, whether plaintiff or defendant, who asserts the affirmative of the issue has the burden of proof to obtain a favorable judgment. For the defendant, an affirmative defense is one which is not a denial of an essential ingredient in the plaintiff's cause of action, but one which, if established, will be a good defense—i.e., an "avoidance" of the claim. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, Supreme Transline, Inc. v. Court of Appeals, November 21, 2001, G. R. No. 125356]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

Maid found dead in Makati City

MAKATI policemen are investigating the death of a housemaid who was left alone to mind her employer's house in Makati City over the weekend.

Police said Marietta Eballer, 25, single and a native of Leyte, was last seen alive on Friday when her Japanese employer left her alone in his house in San Lorenzo Village, Makati City.

Yushikini Sato, 48, a World Health Organization doctor, told police he and his family went to Anilao, Batangas for a weekend vacation.

About mindnight Sunday, Sato came home and discovered the body of Eballer, police said.

She was face down on the living room floor, with blood coming out of her nose. The body was already stiff when found, police said.

Alcuin Papa

Jancom willing to cut . . .

From page A21

Second, the MMDA must be given a free hand to negotiate garbage deals with other contractors who will take up the rest of the garbage Jancom will be unable to collect.

Metro Manila generates around 6,000 to 8,000 tons of garbage each day. Jancom's contract with the government allows the waste firm to collect only 3,000 tons of garbage a day.

The MMDA has a pending contract with Pro-Environment for 2,000 tons.

Abalos said he has yet to discuss with Jancom officials which parts of the contract will be amended.

Abalos also said he will have to inform the Office of the Solicitor General, the Department of Justice and the President's legal advisers, about the changes in the deal "so that there will be no more flaws."

The MMDA chief also dismissed calls to re-bid the contract because "the rights and obligations of the parties have already been established."

He added the MMDA would open itself to lawsuits if they decided to hold another bidding.

The controversial contract has drawn flak from various environmental watchdogs and anti-corruption groups.

As the world observed Earth Day yesterday, the environment groups took the occasion to call on President Macapagal-Arroyo to drop negotiations with Jancom, warning her that she would be a "party to corruption" if she continued to allow negotiations between the MMDA and Jancom.

"Today being Earth Day, the President . must deny Jancom the right to implement their entire project, including the sanitary landfill, which was won through crooked means," Gideon Javier, spokesman for Bantay Kontrata/Clean Air Coalition, said in a press statement.

Javier claimed that the 1995 bidding for the garbage contract was rigged to favor Jancom.

Two weeks ago, the Supreme Court ruled with finality that the controversial deal was "valid and perfected," and may be implemented as soon the President signs it.

But last week, the President herself said she would not to sign the contract because it was "flawed."

Pregnant woman kills self in Tondo house

HOUSE Elizabeth Sanolan, 34, who was four months pregnant killed herself by hanging on Sunday following a quarrel with her live-in partner, police said.

On Saturday night, neighbors heard Sanolan quarreling with her live-in partner Obet Perez, whom she had been living with for a year at the Parola Compound in Tondo, Manila, said detective Dennis Paul Javier of the Western Police District homicide section.

Sanolan was a widow before she met Perez.

Javier said Sanolan confronted Perez over rumors that he had another other family.

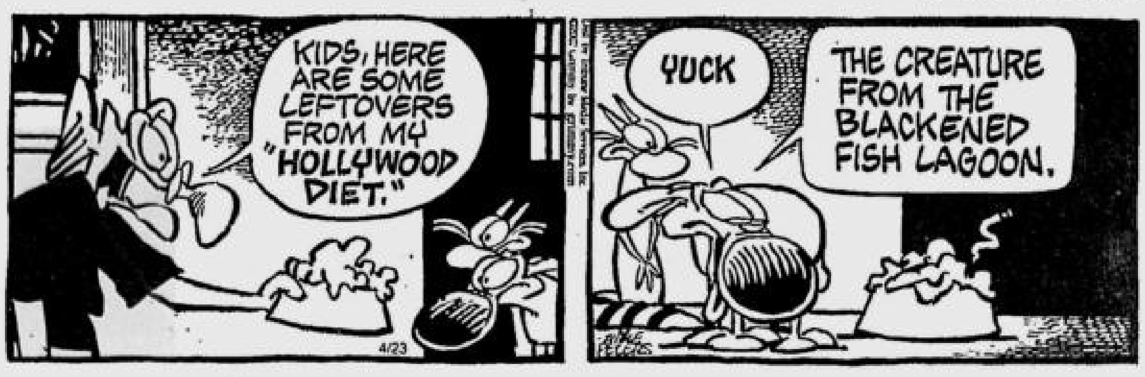
Perez left the house and did not come home that night, Javier said.

Their landlady Judity Belvin found Sanolan dead at about 1:30 p.m. Sunday. The woman was four months pregnant with Perez's child, Javier said.

Philip Tubeza

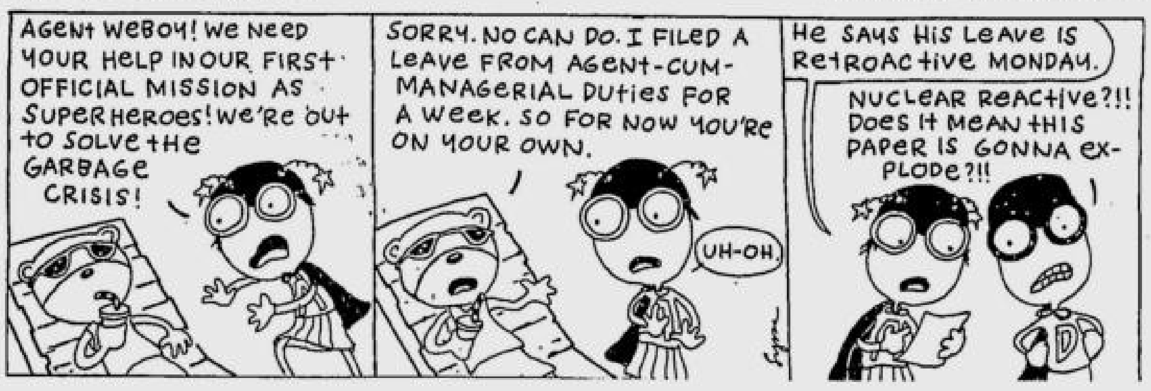
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


KIDS, HERE ARE SOME LEFTOVERS FROM MY "HOLLYWOOD DIET."
4/23
YUCK
THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACKENED FISH LAGOON.

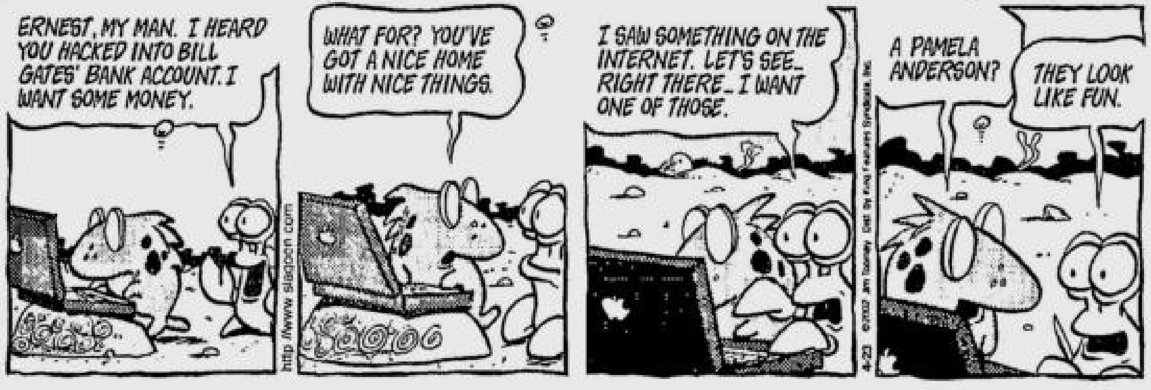
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AGENT WEBOY! WE NEED YOUR HELP IN OUR FIRST OFFICIAL MISSION AS SUPERHEROES! WE'RE OUT TO SOLVE THE GARBAGE CRISIS!
SORRY. NO CAN DO. I FILED A LEAVE FROM AGENT-CUM-MANAGERIAL DUTIES FOR A WEEK. SO FOR NOW YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.
UH-OH.
HE SAYS HIS LEAVE IS RETROACTIVE MONDAY.
NUCLEAR REACTIVE?!! DOES IT MEAN THIS PAPER IS GONNA EXPLODE?!!

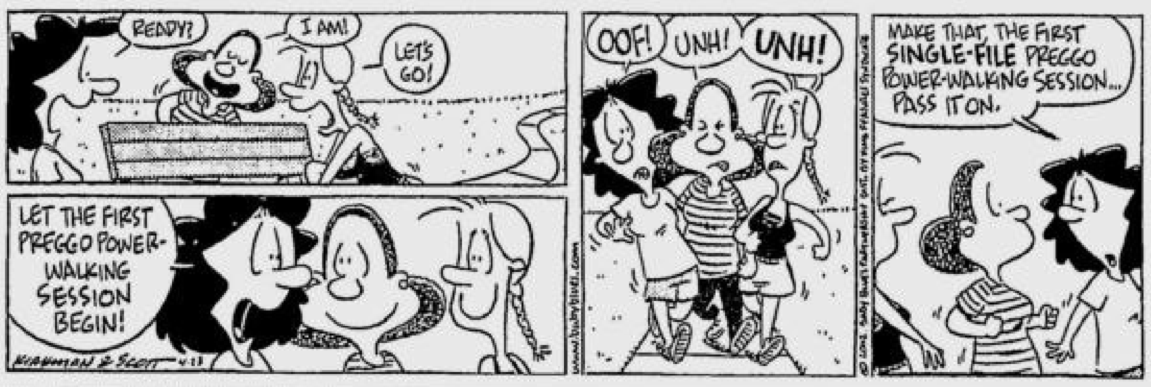
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


ERNEST, MY MAN. I HEARD YOU HACKED INTO BILL GATES' BANK ACCOUNT. I WANT SOME MONEY.
WHAT FOR? YOU'VE GOT A NICE HOME WITH NICE THINGS.
http://www.slagoon.com
I SAW SOMETHING ON THE INTERNET. LET'S SEE... RIGHT THERE... I WANT ONE OF THOSE.
A PAMELA ANDERSON?
THEY LOOK LIKE FUN.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


READY?
I AM!
LET'S GO!
LET THE FIRST PREGGO POWER-WALKING SESSION BEGIN!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT 4-23
www.babyblues.com
OOF!
UNH!
UNH!
MAKE THAT, THE FIRST SINGLE-FILE PREGGO POWER-WALKING SESSION... PASS IT ON.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shirley Temple Black, Roy Orbison, Valerie Bertinelli, Lee Majors

Happy Birthday: You'll be well disciplined in any pursuits you follow and cautious when dealing with others. You will want to change the people you care most about. Renovations to your home will turn out well this year. Your numbers are 8, 12, 15, 22, 31, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You'll be outgoing and determined to let everyone see how valuable you really are. Your creative abilities will shine and recognition will be yours.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): The more socializing you do today, the better you'll feel and the more people you'll meet. Keep in mind that you can have a good time without spending too much.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't be surprised if someone you know well isn't that easy to get along with. Don't become emotional or try to sort out why this person is reacting the way he or she is.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Get together with anyone who can help you get ahead. If you can show people what you have been working on or tell them your intentions you will discover help

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Opportunities are apparent today, so do whatever it takes to promote yourself and your work. Talk to someone you trust and you will get an honest answer regarding your intentions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You may not know which end is up today at an emotional and personal level, but if you do not allow your personal life to interfere with your business responsibilities, you will make headway.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Work quietly behind the scenes and you will accomplish a lot more today. Your creative talent can be put to good use if you channel it into detail and your present hobbies.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put your talent to good use. You know how to make things happen and how to help the underdog. Your valuable knowledge will come in handy in an organization that you believe in.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may experience difficulties at work. Partnerships may be limiting if you have not been facing up to existing problems. You will damage your reputation if you become involved with clients.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Partnerships will develop if you socialize with people working in the same industry as yourself. You should be prepared to travel or attend a convention that will bring you fascinating information.

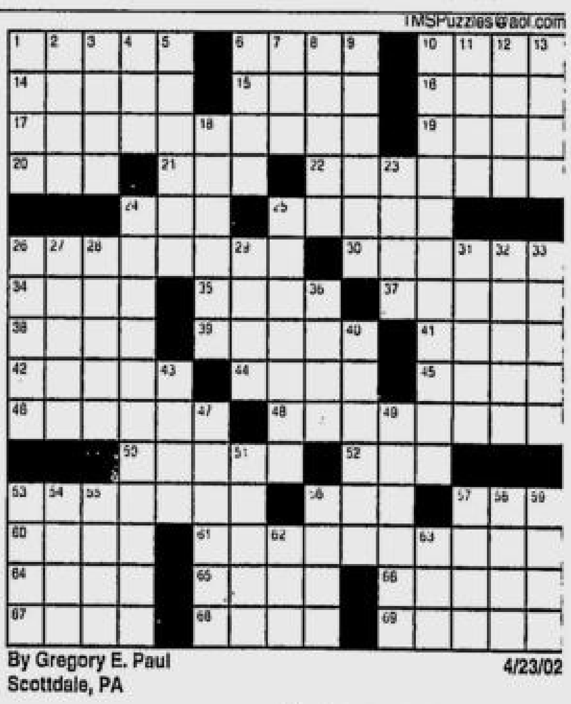
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can invest but don't get involved in joint financial ventures or any form of gambling. Get involved in a hobby that will challenge you as well as take your mind off your worries.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Both business and emotional connections may be a little strained today. Try to take a lighter approach to life. Your ability to put others at ease should help you keep things running smoothly.

Birthday Baby: You have a way with words that adds to your charm and your personality. You have strong ideas and will stand up for your beliefs. You will always take the road less traveled in order to create an intellectual challenge.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA

4/23/02

ACROSS

1 Enrage
6 Org. of oil producers
10 Lively party
14 Daredevil's asset
15 Doozy
16 "Do __ others as..."
17 Friend of Mother Nature
19 Clipped piece
20 Oriental sauce
21 Greek letter
22 Encoded characters
24 Herd of whales
25 Perch at a luncheonette
26 Hit the road
30 Volcano, at times
34 Vincent Lopez theme song
35 Social climber
37 Mil. address
38 Writer Murdoch
39 Stopwatch
41 Actor Richard
42 Reinvigorated
44 Fisherman's yarn
45 Manipulates
46 Property delineations
48 Tape
50 Robert of "Vega$"
52 Vette or Caddy
53 Treacherous trick
56 Hero, briefly
57 Dry, as wine
60 Dismounted
61 Member of the wedding
64 Valuable deposit
65 Arm bone
66 Moon lander
67 Look lustfully
68 Plunder
69 Tendon

DOWN

1 Acacia crawlers
2 Roman tyrant
3 Western writer Zane
4 Plumb or Arden
5 Prepare leftovers
6 Russian saint
7 Thickset dog
8 Vote in
9 Odd ornaments
10 Minors player
11 __ of Cleves
12 Get out of bed
13 1950s dances
18 Nth degree
23 Explosive sounds
24 Lawn mower
25 Breadbasket
26 Get a whiff of
27 Braves catcher of the '60s
28 Foreigner
29 Army group
31 Take by force
32 Well-plumed bird
33 Singer Della
36 Actor Lugosi
40 Firefighter's feat
43 Male lead
47 Wicked
49 Buffalo team
51 Casals' instrument
53 Drop dramatically
54 Soothing substance
55 Facet
56 Swing at
57 Indication
58 First name in mysteries
59 Ball of yarn
62 Pioneer performance artist
63 Moo goo __ pan

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	L	E	C	■	S	C	R	A	M	■	A	S	E	A
P	U	R	R	■	O	L	I	V	E	■	L	U	L	L
E	L	I	A	■	L	A	C	E	S	■	E	R	M	A
S	U	N	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	■	U	F	O	S
■	■	■	T	O	S	S	■	■	M	A	T	T	■	■
A	S	S	E	T	■	■	B	R	A	G	■	H	A	M
L	E	A	D	■	G	Y	R	A	T	E	■	E	L	I
A	N	N	■	C	L	E	A	R	E	D	■	N	O	T
M	O	D	■	H	A	L	V	E	S	■	W	E	N	T
O	R	B	■	I	S	L	E	■	■	C	I	T	E	S
■	■	A	C	T	S	■	■	T	A	U	T	■	■	■
H	I	G	H	■	W	A	V	E	L	E	N	G	T	H
E	D	G	E	■	A	R	E	N	T	■	E	R	I	E
A	L	E	S	■	R	I	N	S	E	■	S	I	D	E
R	E	D	S	■	E	A	T	E	R	■	S	P	E	D

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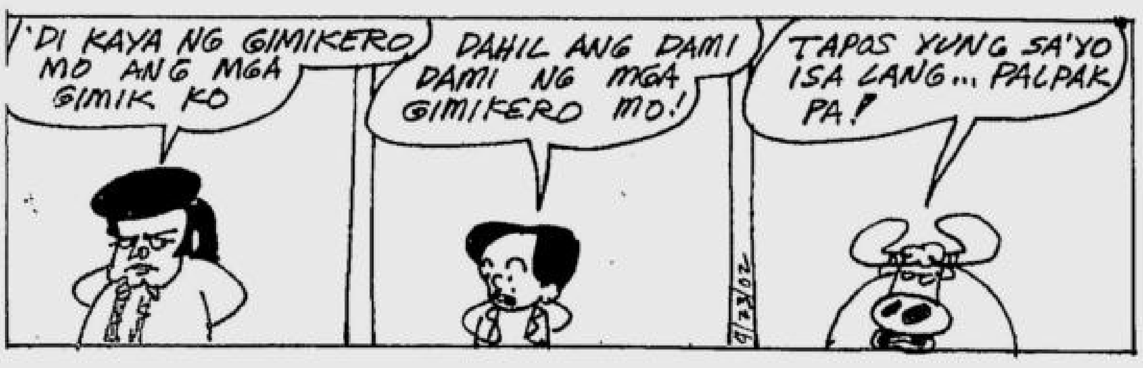
4/23/02

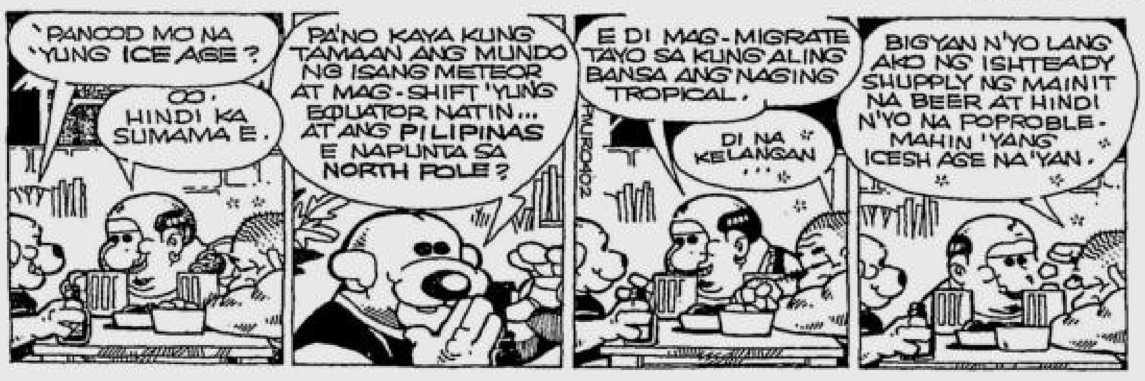
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'DI KAYA NG GIMIKERO MO ANG MGA GIMIK KO
DAHIL ANG DAMI DAMI NG MGA GIMIKERO MO!
4/23/02
TAPOS YUNG SA'YO ISA LANG... PALPAK PA!

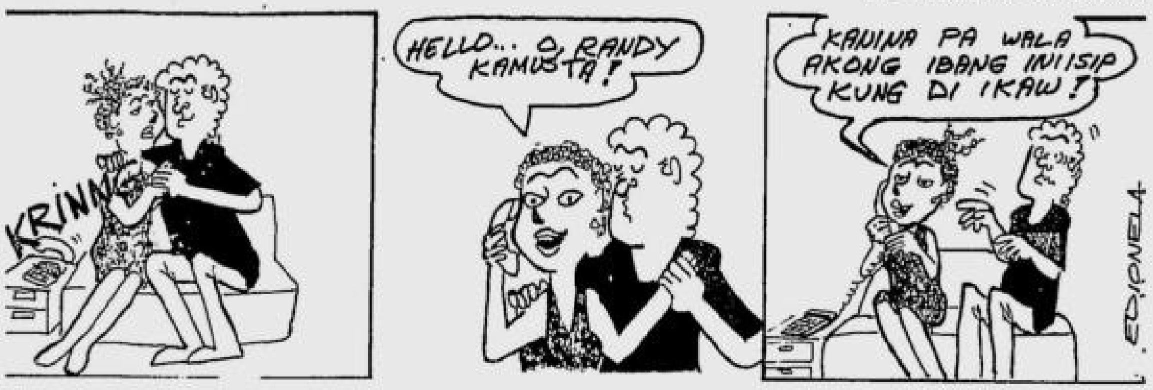
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'PANOOD MO NA 'YUNG ICE AGE?
OO. HINDI KA SUMAMA E.
PA'NO KAYA KUNG TAMAAN ANG MUNDO NG ISANG METEOR AT MAG-SHIFT 'YUNG EQUATOR NATIN... AT ANG PILIPINAS E NAPUNTA SA NORTH POLE?
E DI MAG-MIGRATE TAYO SA KUNG ALING BANSA ANG NAGING TROPICAL.
DI NA KELANGAN...
BIGYAN N'YO LANG AKO NG ISHTEADY SHUPPLY NG MAINIT NA BEER AT HINDI N'YO NA POPROBLEMAHIN 'YANG ICESH AGE NA'YAN.

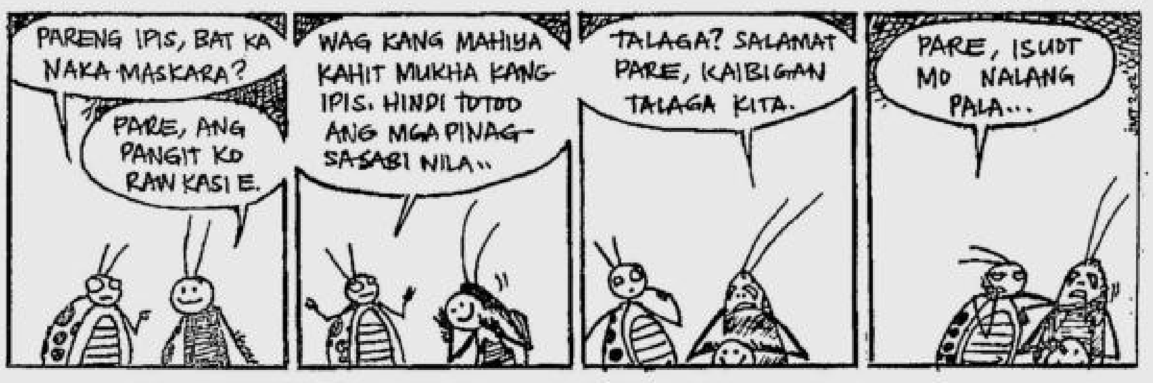
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


KRINNG
HELLO... O, RANDY KAMUSTA!
KANINA PA WALA AKONG IBANG INIISIP KUNG DI IKAW!
EDIONELA

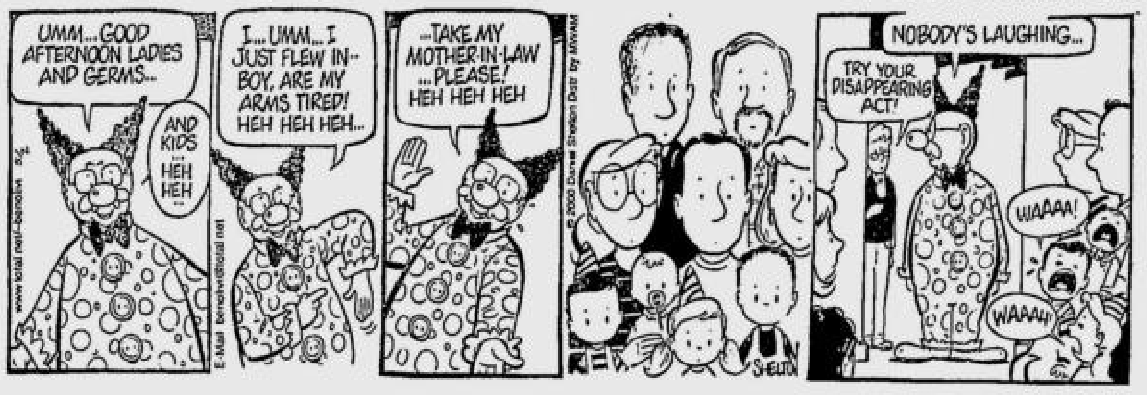
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PARENG IPIS, BAT KA NAKA-MASKARA?
PARE, ANG PANGIT KO RAW KASI E.
WAG KANG MAHIYA KAHIT MUKHA KANG IPIS. HINDI TOTOO ANG MGA PINAGSASABI NILA..
TALAGA? SALAMAT PARE, KAIBIGAN TALAGA KITA.
PARE, ISUOT MO NALANG PALA...

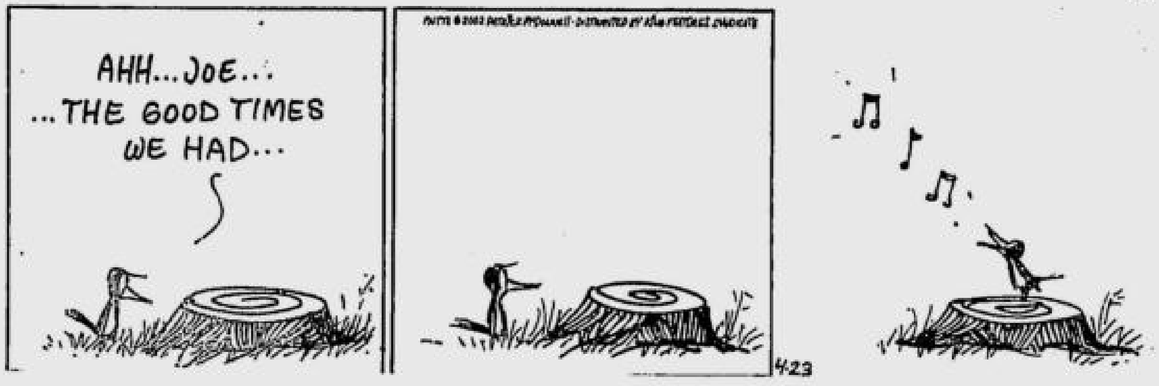
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


UMM...GOOD AFTERNOON LADIES AND GERMS...
AND KIDS ... HEH HEH ...
I...UMM...I JUST FLEW IN-- BOY, ARE MY ARMS TIRED! HEH HEH HEH...
...TAKE MY MOTHER-IN-LAW ...PLEASE! HEH HEH HEH
SHELTON
NOBODY'S LAUGHING...
TRY YOUR DISAPPEARING ACT!
WAAAA!
WAAAH!

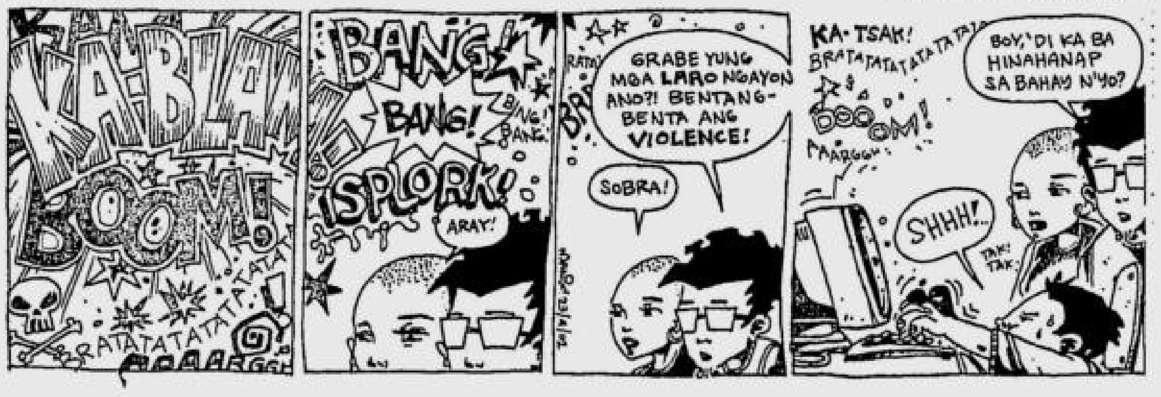
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AHH...JOE... ...THE GOOD TIMES WE HAD...
4/23

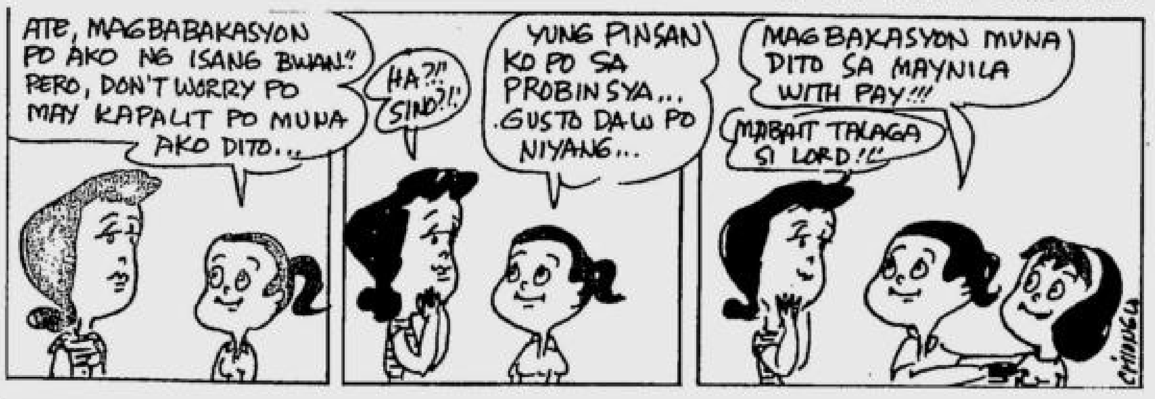
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KA-BLAM!
BOOM!
BRATATATATATAT
AAAARGGH
BANG!
BANG!
BANG! BANG!
ISPLORK!
ARAY!
GRABE YUNG MGA LARO NGAYON ANO?! BENTANG-BENTA ANG VIOLENCE!
SOBRA!
KA-TSAK!
BRATATATATATATATA
BOOOM!
PAARGGH
BOY, 'DI KA BA HINAHANAP SA BAHAY N'YO?
SHHH!
TAK! TAK!

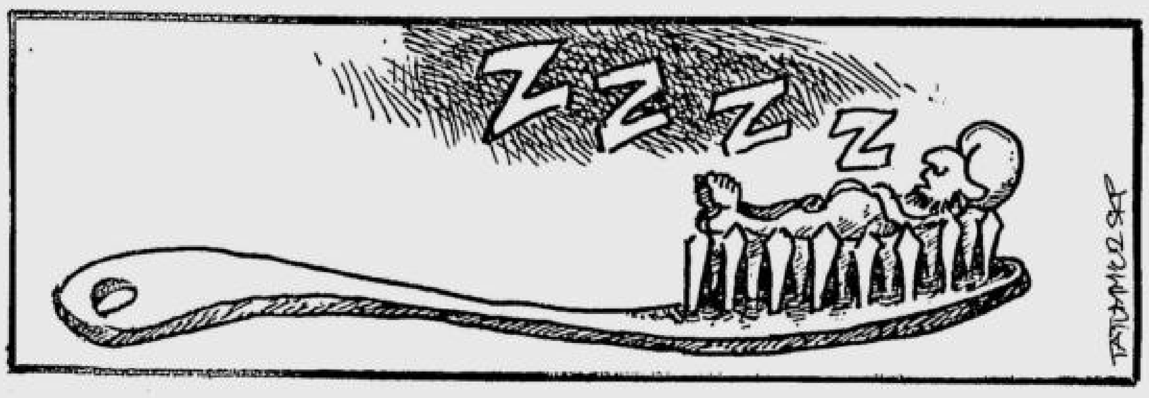
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ATE, MAGBABAKASYON PO AKO NG ISANG BWAN!! PERO, DON'T WORRY PO MAY KAPALIT PO MUNA AKO DITO...
HA?!! SINO?!!
YUNG PINSAN KO PO SA PROBINSYA... GUSTO DAW PO NIYANG...
MAGBAKASYON MUNA DITO SA MAYNILA WITH PAY!!!
MABAIT TALAGA SI LORD!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



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4173888

1 RIPPER
2 BLADE 2
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5 SCORPION KING
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7 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
8 TIME MACHINE

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161418

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3 SCORPION KING
4 DEEP END
5 SCORPION KING
6 MASARAP ANG BAWAL
7 SHOWTIME
8 BLADE 2
9 SNOW DOGS
10 MONTE CRISTO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 E.T.
2 MONTE CRISTO
3 SHOWTIME
4 SCORPION KING
5 SNOW DOGS
6 S2PID LUV
7 SCORPION KING
8 BLADE 2
9 MIMIC 2
10 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
11 TIME MACHINE
12 ICE AGE

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 SNOW DOGS
2 ICE AGE
3 DEEP END
4 SCORPION KING
5 SHOWTIME
6 SCORPION KING
7 MONTE CRISTO
8 MIMIC-2
9 S2PID LUV
10 E.T.
11 BLADE 2
12 MONTE CRISTO

SM MEGAMALL
6331001 • 6329401

1 SCORPION KING
2 BLADE 2
3 SCORPION KING
4 SNOW DOGS
5 ICE AGE
6 DEEP END
7 SHOWTIME
8 RIPPER
9 S2PID LUV
10 SCORPION KING
11 MONTE CRISTO
12 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 BLADE 2
2 SCORPION KING
3 MONTE CRISTO
4 S2PID LUV
5 DEEP END
6 SNOW DOGS
7 SCORPION KING
8 SHOWTIME
9 CLOSED
10 CLOSED
11 CLOSED
12 CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 ICE AGE
2 DEEP END
3 SCORPION KING
4 SHOWTIME
5 E.T.
6 SNOW DOGS
7 S2PID LUV
8 SCORPION KING
9 BLADE-2
10 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 SCORPION KING
2 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3 ROYAL TENENBAUMS
4 MAJESTIC
5 BANDITS
6 MONTE CRISTO
7 S2PID LUV
8 SCORPION KING

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 MAJESTIC
2 CLOSED
3 BANDITS
4 S2PID LUV
5 ROYAL TENENBAUMS
6 SCORPION KING
7 CLOSED
8 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 BLADE 2
2 SCORPION KING
3 SCORPION KING
4 HARTS WAR
5 BLOW DRY
6 S2PID LUV

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 RIPPER
2 SCORPION KING
3 S2PID LUV
4 MIMIC 2

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
2 SCORPION KING
3 S2PID LUV

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 SCORPION KING
2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3 S2PID LUV
4 SNOW DOGS

SM CITY DAVAO
2978998

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 BANDITS
4 EVIL WOMAN
5 SCORPION KING
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

1
2

SOON TO OPEN!
2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

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G1 GP Great Price (GLORIETTA 1)

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 SCORPION KING
4 SHOWTIME

G4 (GLORIETTA 4)

1 SHOWTIME
2 SCORPION KING
3 THX SCORPION KING 11:25 am/ 1:30 pm/ 3:35/ 5:40/ 7:45/ 9:50 GUARANTEED SEATS
4 BEFORE THE NIGHT FALLS
5 DEEP END
6 SCORPION KING
7 SNOW DOGS

GB1 (GREENBELT 1)

1 MONTE CRISTO
2 SCORPION KING
3 SHOWTIME
4 Onstage LANI ON SATGE APRIL 20, 26 & 27 9:00 PM

ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)

1 THX SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 SCORPION KING
4 DEEP END
5 SNOW DOGS

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS) DEEP END
2 (SDDS) SCORPION KING
3 (DTS) ICE AGE
4 GOLD (DTS) SHOWTIME
5 GOLD (DOLBY) SNOW DOG
6 GOLD (SDDS) SCORPION KING
7 GOLD (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
8 S2PID LUV
9 MONTE CRISTO
10 E.T.

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1 RESERVE
2 HOT DOG
3 (DTS) RESERVE
4 HARTS WAR
5 RESERVE
6 (DTS) RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1 S2PID LUV
2 SCORPION KING
3 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 RIPPER
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) SNOW DOGS
5 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1 PAROLA
2 IKA PITONG GLORIA
3 S2PID LUV
4 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5 DEEP END
6 SCORPION KING
7
8

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1 SCORPION KING

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2 ICE AGE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1
2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3 BUBOT

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1 HOT DOG THE MOVIE
A SNAKE CHARMER

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 ITLOG
4 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5 S2PID LUV
6 DEEP END
7 (DTS) SCORPION KING
8 (SDDS) SNOW DOGS
9 (DOLBY) RIPPER

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 S2PID LUV
2 HARI NG SELDA
3 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
4 (SDDS) SCORPION KING
5 SNOW DOG
6 (DOLBY) BLADE 2
7 (DTS) SCORPION KING
8 PAROLA
9 SHOWTIME

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS) RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5 (SDDS) SCORPION KING
6 S2PID LUV
7 (DOLBY) SNOW DOGS
8 BLADE 2

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 S2PID LUV
2 BLADE 2
3 (DTS) SNOW DOG
4 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5 (SDDS) SCORPION KING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 SCORPION KING

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 SCORPION KING

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson PAROLA
Lords MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
Jennet

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 RESERVE
4 S2PID LUV
5 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1
2
3
4
5
6

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Berma
tel 879.2029

1 SCORPION KING
2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1 CLOSED
2 CLOSED

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1 S2PID LUV
2 BANDITS
3 (DTS) SCORPION KING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 S2PID LUV
2 (DTS) BANDITS
3 (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
4 EVIL WOMAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 S2PID LUV
2 (DOLBY) EVIL WOMAN
3 (DTS) SCORPION KING
4 SCORPION KING

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 S2PID LUV
2 SCORPION KING
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 S2PID LUV
2 MONTE CRISTO
3 (DOLBY) BANDITS
4 (DTS) E.T.

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) S2PID 2
2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3 SNAKE CHARMER
4 (DTS) SCORPION KING

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 (DTS) SNAKE CHARMER
4 EVIL WOMAN
5 BLADE2

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 S2PID LUV
2 SCORPION KING
3 BLOW DRY

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 BLOW DRY

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 TIME MACHINE
2 E.T.
3 ITLOG

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1 S2PID LUV
2 SCORPION KING
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) TIME MACHINE
2 (DTS) SCORPION KING

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2365

1

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 SCORPION KING
2 S2PID LUV
3 TIME MACHINE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

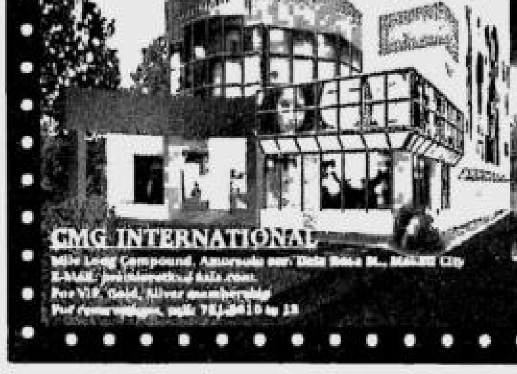
1 EVIL WOMAN
2 MAJESTIC
3 BLADE 2
4 MIMIC 2

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) BLADE 2
2 S2PID LUV
3 (DTS) SCORPION KING
4 HAR1'S WAR

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS



PREMIERE CINEMA
THX
NOW SHOWING!
THE ROCK
THE SCORPION KING

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS @ Robinsons Malls

NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632-911 633-7641 loc. 270

1 THX SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 SCORPION KING
4 DEEP END
5 SNOW DOGS
6 MONTE CRISTO
7 ICE AGE
8 SHOW TIME
9 RIPPER
10 BLADE 2

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1 SCORPION KING
2 RIPPER
3 SHOWTIME
4 DEEP END
5 S2PID LUV
6 SNOW DOGS
7 SCORPION KING

Metro East - Marcos hway 682-8193 / 8280

1 SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 SHOWTIME
4 SNOW DOGS
5 ICE AGE
6 S2PID LUV
7 BLADE 2
8 RIPPER

Novaliches 935-3229 - 30

1 SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 SHOWTIME
4 RIPPER
5 E.T.
6 BLADE 2
7 ICE AGE
8 S2PID LUV

Imus 471-8188 / 875-3838

1 SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 S2PID LUV
4 SNOW DOGS
5 RIPPER
6 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Bacolod 441-0453 / 0459

1 SCORPION KING
2 BANDITS
3 MAJESTIC
4 MONTE CRISTO
5 ROYAL TENEBAUMS
6 ALI

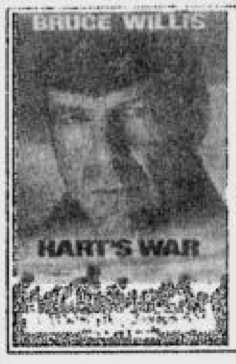
Iloilo 336-8077 - 78

1 SCORPION KING
2 BANDITS
3 MAJESTIC
4 QUEEN OF THE DUMNED
5 MONTE CRISTO
6 E.T.

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp. 875-1927 961-5318 / 5270

1 SCORPION KING
2 SCORPION KING
3 S2PID LUV
4 HARTS WAR
5 EVIL WOMAN
6 EVIL WOMAN

malabon citisquare- soon to open.



Late Night Screening

on April 12 & 13, 2002 Friday & Saturday - 11:00 p.m. @ Robinsons Movieworld Galleria

how-2-reach-us:

email: htc@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
call-a-movie 536-7812

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Top bands gather in summer band explosion in Nueva Ecija

PUBLICIST-restaurateur Hanzel Villafuerte has whipped up the hottest musical event at the Central Plain of Luzon as he mounts the annual summer band explosion of his Hanzel Bar 'n Grille (HBNG).

Hanzel Bar 'n Grille has been operating for almost a year and it is the only theme restaurant and entertainment venue found in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

Now on its first year, HBNG gathers together the country's top bands and artists.

Dubbed as "Friday Summer Gimik Bank Explosion at Hanzel Bar n' Grille," the series of events happens on all Fridays of April and May (April 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31).

The concert series kicks off at 7 p.m. and carries on until dawn.

For inquiries and reservations call 044-4565339 or 0918-5630511/ 0919-64855065.

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GLORIETTA 1 & 4 / GREENBELT / ALABANG TOWN CENTER / AYALA CENTER CEBU
FROM THE MAKERS OF THE MUMMY AND THE MUMMY RETURNS!

WARRIOR. LEGEND. KING.
THE ROCK
THE SCORPION KING

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Special thanks to: PHILIPS
Pizza Hut
united international pictures

MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted
Strictly for ADULTS
No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

ROLLERBALL
GET IN THE GAME.
www.rollerball.com

Bakbakan na!

Hot movie on new 'bloodsport' from the director of 'Die Hard'

High-octane action director John McTiernan (DIE HARD) presents a hot new movie packed with head-slamming action, breakneck speed and visceral thrills, in Columbia Pictures' ROLLERBALL.

In 2005, a violent game is the world's #1 phenomenon. Watched by the entire world, Rollerball is an extreme blood sport played with motorbikes, skates, a figure 8 track, a steel ball -- and no rules.

But the world's most dangerous game is about to become deadly. When serious on-court accidents bring higher viewer ratings, the players soon find themselves playing for their lives!

Stars Chris Klein of AMERICAN PIE, LL Cool J, and the incredibly sexy Rebecca Romijn Stamos.

THE BATTLE begins TOMORROW !

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	S2PID LUV
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BLADE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	SNOW DOGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DEEP END
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	RIPPER
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	INOG SA PILIT/TEEN HOUSED
ODEON	SCORPION KING
ODEON-2	ITLOG
ROBEN	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	HOT DOG
TIMES	THE OTHERS/TIGERS CLAWS
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR-2	SCORPION KING
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	S2PID LUV
B	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-2	3RD GERMAN FILM WEEK
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HOTDOG
CINEMA-2	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MIMIC 2
CINEMA-6	ICE AGE
CINEMA-7	E.T.
CINEMA-8	BLADE 2
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-12	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-14	RIPPER
CINEMA-15	S2PID LUV
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-2	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-3	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-4	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-5	DEEP END
CINEMA-6	SCORPION KING
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

MONTE CRISTO-P13	SCORPION KING- P 13	SNOW DOGS - GP
11:20, 2:00, 4:40,7:20,10:00	11:00, 1:00, 3:05, 5:10, 7:15, 9:20	12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30
SHOWTIME - P 13	**DEEP END - R18**	**SCORPION KING-P13**
1:20, 3:30,5:40, 7:50, 10:00	12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	12:00, 2:00, 4:05, 6:10, 8;15, 10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

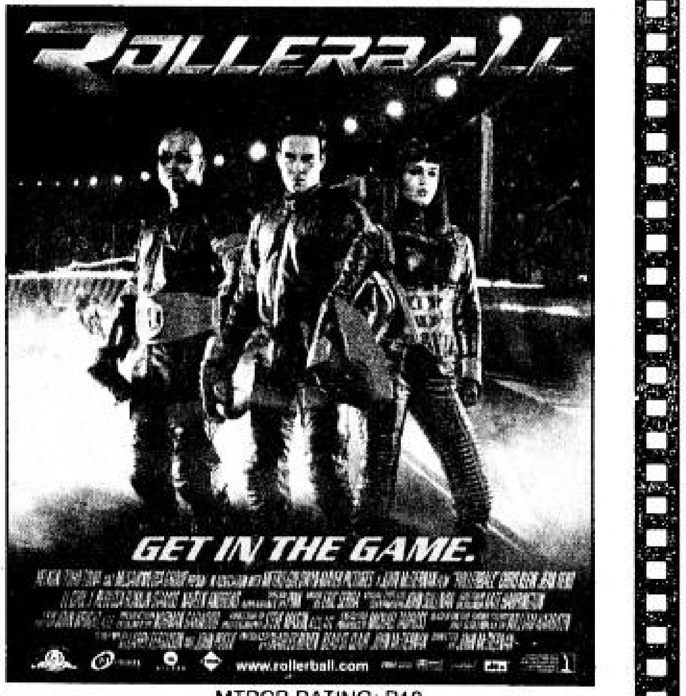
CINEMA 1
SCORPION KING
12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00
P13

CINEMA 2
SCORPION KING
11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00
P13

Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5;00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
Reserved Sealing: P120.00 - After 5:00pm; Saturday, Sunday, Holidays
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
MUSIC MUSEUM
MAY 4, 2002 (ALLAN K.) K NA K KA NA BA? REPEAT 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

See it first!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING



MTRCB RATING: R18
Invitational DWLS Screening on April 23, 2002 • 7:30 pm
SM Megamall Cinema 1
Regular showing on April 24 at the SM CINEMAS.

NOW SHOWING
@
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA
Javier Bardem
Olivier Martinez Andrea Di Stefano
Johnny Depp & Sean Penn

"'Before Night Falls' is rapturous, intoxicating filmmaking... Don't miss it! Javier Bardem gives a mesmerizing and inspired performance!"
-Rex Reed, New York Observer

"'Before Night Falls' is a potent, visually stunning masterpiece! Javier Bardem gives a riveting, emotionally naked performace."
-Guy Flatley, Interview

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R) Strictly For Adults

WARNING! This film is unanimously rated R-18 for its adult thematic content which is Homosexuality and scenarios of NUDITY.

AYALA CINEMAS
SKYFILMS

BEFORE
NIGHT
FALLS
THE BEST FILM OF 2000

FROM THE MAKERS OF THE MUMMY AND THE MUMMY RETURNS!

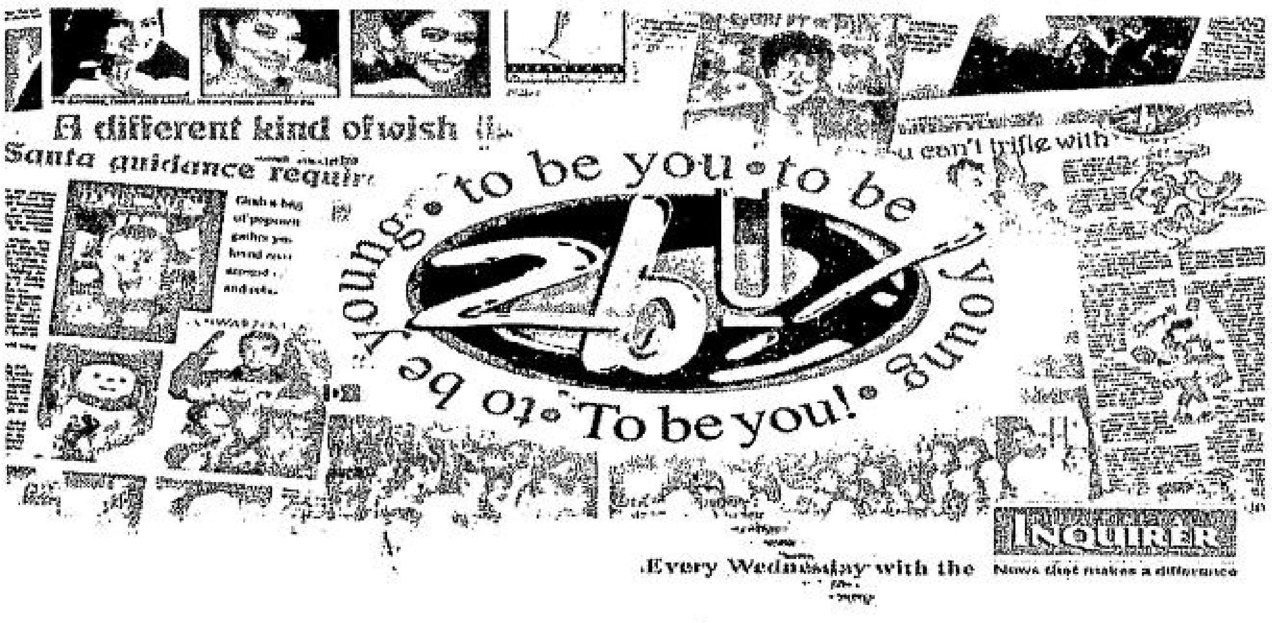
WARRIOR. LEGEND. KING.
THE ROCK
THE SCORPION KING
The Scorpion King original soundtrack is now out on CDs and casettes. Featuring the hit single "I Stand Alone" By Godsmack

NOW SHOWING AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS
Vortex
UNIVERSAL MCA UNIVERSAL
united international pictures

THE MAGIC OF PETER PAN IN AN ALL-NEW DISNEY ADVENTURE!
FLYING INTO THEATERS TOMORROW!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage
ALL AGES ADMITTED

PETER PAN
IN
DISNEY'S
RETURN TO
NEVER LAND

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures



ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Nora hosts public service show

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MANY people seem to have given up on regularly seeing **Nora Aunor** on the big and small screens, but I've always been a cockeyed optimist in that regard.

I continue to believe "against all odds" that Nora, still has some great performances left in her, as long as she's given fresh, challenging concepts, and is handled by people who won't put up with her usual gimmicks and ploys for sympathy, and won't do lazy work and simply ride on her reputation, as quite a number of her so-called friends have done in the past.

Nora's new film hasn't happened yet, and it has been quite a few years since her last one, but I'm not throwing in the towel just yet. Especially now that I hear that she will soon be seen on a weekly show on IBC 13, every Friday from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

The TV show has a public service format and is titled "n.o.r.a. mismo." With the show, Nora aims to help the poor and disadvantaged by linking them up with sources of assistance from the public and private sectors.

No, the Superstar swears, this doesn't mean that she will be running again in the next elections, thus her need to restore her links with the *masa*.

She's agreed to do the show because, at this mature stage of her life, she has had occasion to recall that she was bon dirt-poor herself, but managed to become rich and famous through sheer dint of talent and hard work, and she now wants to help other poor people make something of *their* lives.

We trust, therefore, that her new public service show won't have the usual "doleout mentality," but will instead motivate the impoverished to work hard to solve their own problems, with the assistance of some concerned organizations or individuals.

It would also help if Nora is given a cohost who is well-versed in social work, so that her all-heart desire to help the poor can be buttressed by more solid programs and systems.

We trust, too, that the show does most of its work without the usual parade of politicians making a big display of their vaunted kindness and generosity. Nora's sincerity should be matched by her resource persons and donors' self-effacement.

We know that this is asking a lot from our politicians, but hope springs. Besides, viewers have had it with "political charity" on the tube, so if it continues to be perpetrated and perpetuated, it would be counter-productive.

Anyway, let's give the Superstar's new show a chance, and support its good intentions. Nora deserves a success at this low point in her career, and if some of the country's poor can succeed with her by way of this show, so much the better!

As for that challenging comeback film that will revive her acting career, we're prepared to wait some more. But it would be wonderful if it could be shot and complete in time for this December's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Laffline anniversary

ON April 30, the Laffline music bar on Timog ave. in Quezon City marks its second anniversary with a glittering, fun-filled bash. The entertainment venue's unique combination of stand-up comedy, videoke singing and "cariño brutal" putdowns has clicked with night owls, who fill the place especially on weekends.

Character of the Month

THIS May, the Cartoon Network's Character of the Month is **Velma Dinkley**. "Scooby-Doo's" Velma is always the first to decipher clues. She is a Sherlock Holmes in spectacles, and the undisputed brains of the Scooby-Doo sleuthing agency, Mystery Inc.

Unlike Scooby, Velma is very easy to find. Simply look for her distinctive orange outfit and listen for her trademark exclamation of "Jinkies!," which she lets loose with every time she makes a significant discovery. Catch her on the Cartoon Network every Sunday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

'Next @ CNN'

"Next@CNN" is a half-hour newsmagazine program that covers the latest developments and breakthroughs in science, technology, space, aviation and environmental affairs. Hosted by **James Hattori**, it includes reports from correspondents from CNN bureaus worldwide.

Segments for technology enthusiasts are also featured: "Technofile," a review of the latest digital gadgets and computer accessories; "Tools," on how to utilize the Internet and digital technology' and "Nothin' But Net," a profile of noteworthy websites.

"Next@CNN is telecast Saturdays at 12:30 p.m., Sundays at 6:30 a.m., and Mondays at 9:30 a.m.

'Nat Geo Max'

THE NATIONAL Geographic Channel's new compilation show, "NAT Geo Max" (M-F, 9 to 10 p.m.) offers these treats this month:

Friday, April 26, "Afghanistan Revisited." See what life is like for Afghanistan's rebel fighters and other people living on the frontlines of political strife.

Monday, April 29, "Jamu, the Orphaned Leopard (1)." Experience life in Zambia through the eyes of an orphaned leopard.

Tuesday, April 30, "Jamu, the Orphaned Leopard, 2."

Superstar has become her mentor's tormentor

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

GUESS who this seasoned actress is who got so insecure because her mentor is giving more attention to his new protégée—a hot young actress. To think, she is already so established in the biz and newcomers aspire to achieve even just half of what she has accomplished.

The problem with superstars is that most of them refuse to realize that there's room for everybody. As they say, it's lonely at the top, especially if there's no other throne but yours.

The entry of fresh faces into the scene does not mean that they are out to dethrone the reigning superstars. To each his own throne!

When her mentor suggested that Miss Superstar's next movie should be with Miss Young Actress, she got enraged "What do I need her for? I can carry a movie on my own!"

The mentor retorted, "You used to but now she's the one who's hot. Not you."

The superstar would not relent so the mentor decided that they better part ways. "This is not going to work anymore. We better end our business relationship," said the mentor.

Poor mentor. Miss Superstar has become his tormentor!

Hooked on E

GUESS who this TV host/actor is who has vehemently been denying that he's hooked on Ecstacy. How could he account for his weird behavior of saying "Merry Christmas!" to everyone he bumps into now that we are well into the peak of summer?

As a movie reporter told me, "He always looks so spaced-out!" Or could his early Christmas greeting be in line with President Macapagal's "holiday adjustment" scheme?

Primadonna

GUESS who this comebacking TV host is who is drowning fast in her new-found success? As an insider puts it, "When newcomers guest on her show, she's chummy with them on air. But once the camera stops rolling, she does not even bother to look at them!

She has become a primadonna and just locks herself up in the make-up room until it's time to shoot again."

Not too long ago, she was so down and out. Now she's up and "out of it!" She is losing grip of reality by believing her own hype.

When you're hot copy, you either warm people's hearts with your talent or burn bridges by being so full of yourself!

Bits and pieces

MY all-time favorite band True Faith is busy wrapping up their next album, "Songs for Dreamers and the Lonely."

The band's lead vocalist **Medwin Marfil** (who provides me with my daily dose of wisdom) beams, "our album will have spiritual touches here and there."

Knowing how soulful Medwin is, I'm sure his new compositions will go straight to everyone's core being."

Is romance brewing between **Maxine** and her fellow RX 93.1 DJ **Jude Rocha**?

A radio insider revealed to me, "When I'm in the radio booth while they are hosting their radio show, I can feel a certain electricity in the air."

Or is that just static signal coming from their transmitters?

The real Noreen?

A COUPLE of Cebuanos have e-mailed me expressing their disgust over **Noreen Andaya**. She's the alleged "girlyloo" (my counterpart term for "boylet") from Cebu of **Rico Yan** before he died.

Gosh! Where's the tail end of all the tales about Rico? His spirit lives on through his foundation. And rumors about him live on via forwarded text and e-mail messages huh?

One Cebuana says "Noreen has a bad reputation here. It's a disgrace for us Cebuanos for someone like her to come out on national TV regarding the Rico Yan issue. Everyone in the party scene knows she's been around. You can ask anyone in Cebu what she's like."

I've never met Noreen so I'd rather not pass judgment on her. But with the sheer number of e-mail I got that all say consistent things about her, I got rather intrigued.

Will the real Noreen Andaya please stand up?

Stand up and fight, girl!

Personal

MUCHISIMAS Gracias to one of the few true gentlemen in the biz, **Edu Manzano.**

Just when I was about to disbelieve in dreams, you made one come true. I can not thank you enough, my friend!

For feedback, e-mail luvludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

Yes-FM pays tribute to the Fab Four

RADIO

YES FM 101.1 will pay tribute to the greatest band that ever graced the entertainment and music industry, The Beatles, with an event dubbed "Beatlemania," April 30 at 70s Bistro and May 3 at Hard Rock Café.

Guest artists Ely Buendia (formerly of The Eraserheads), Chikoy Pura and Nitoy Adriano of The Jerks, Jovy and Rey Abella of Ang Grupong Pendong and Rene Santos of Acoustic Jive will jam on the two-night event that promises to revive the spirit of rock 'n' roll defined by the original Fab Four from Liverpool, England, composed of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr.

To win free entrance tickets, listeners should tupe in to Yes-FM 101.1 and call the station at 840-4747 upon the deejay's signal.

Yes-FM 101.1 is a member of the Manila Broadcasting Company, which owns and operates the largest radio network in the country and Asia.

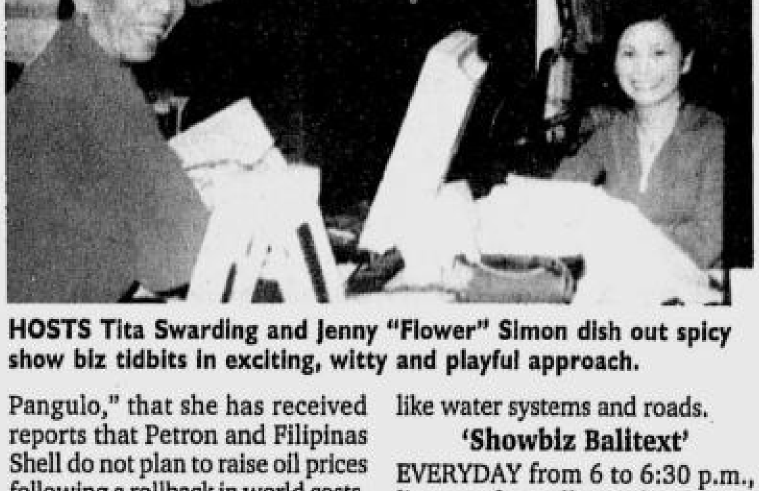
The president on radio

LAST week, President Macapagal-Arroyo revealed in her radio program, "Ang Panawagan ng Pangulo," that she has received reports that Petron and Filipinas Shell do not plan to raise oil prices following a rollback in world costs.

Macapagal also reiterated that local government officials should ignore people who drop the name of her husband, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, and former Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in illegal gambling operations.

She said illegal gambling will not flourish in the first place if local government officials will have the political will.

On reports that more US troops will arrive in Mindanao, Macapagal said the people of Mindanao have asked for American help for infrastructure projects like water systems and roads.



HOSTS Tita Swarding and Jenny "Flower" Simon dish out spicy show biz tidbits in exciting, witty and playful approach.

'Showbiz Balitext'

EVERYDAY from 6 to 6:30 p.m., listeners from all over the country tune in to catch the hottest and most intriguing issues in and outside show business via dzRH's "Showbiz Balitext."

The 30-minute radio show is hosted by Tita Swarding and Jenny "Flower" Simon, who dish out spicy show biz tidbits in an exciting, witty and playful approach.

"Showbiz Balitext" (formerly "Showbiz Balita") is a welcome breather to dzRH's hard news format with its unique, spontaneous and highly entertaining appeal.

A special segment, "Pitik-Bulag," which features blind items, has intrigued listeners a lot, making "Showbiz Balitext" a staple in radio surveys.

Tita Swarding and Jenny's casual, straight and light way of delivering the entertainment news without losing its essence has won the hearts of many listeners from the A-E market. The two get support from field reporters Gorgy Rula and Morly Alinio.

Tita Swarding (Romulo Espina in real life) started his broadcasting career in 1969 on dwOO of the Mareco Broadcasting Network. He first worked as a technician then went on to become one of the early morning jocks who went by the name "Sweet Matutina."

Jenny, meanwhile, first worked as a news writer before she became an entertainment host by accident. dzRH assistant station manager and assistant vice president Deo Macalma discovered her when she pitched in for one of the entertainment reporters. The former then invited Jenny to cohost the infotainment program, "Espesyal na Balita ang Karugtong."

The two first went on air together in 1998. It was not long before they stirred the ire of several show biz personalities with their news and exposés.

POP singer Mandy Moore teams up with Shane West in the love story, "A Walk To Remember."

Mandy Moore headlines coming-of-age story

"A WALK To Remember" is a sweet, sincere and positive love story that it sneaks past the defenses built up in this age of irony.

The film tells the story of a romance between two young lovers that is summarized when the boy tells the girl's suspicious father: "Jamie has faith in me. She makes me want to be different and better."

After all the vulgar crudities of the typical modern romantic movie, here is one that looks closely, pays attention and sees that not all young lovers are as senseless as Hollywood portrays them.

Pop singer Mandy Moore stars as Jamie Sullivan, an outsider at school who is laughed at because she stands apart, has values and always wears the same ratty blue sweater.

Her father, Peter Coyote, is a local minister.

Shane West plays Landon Carter, a rich and popular senior boy who hands with the crowd, but is shaken when a stupid dare goes wrong and one of his friends is paralyzed in a diving accident. He dates a beautiful girl and joins in the laughter against Jamie. Then, as punishment for the prank, he is ordered by the principal to join the drama club.

The movie walks a fine line with the Peter Coyote character, whose church Landon attends. Movies have a way of stereotyping reactionary Bible-thumpers who are hostile to young romance. But when Landon goes to the Rev. Sullivan and asks him to have faith in him, the minister listens with an open mind.

The film also features the best-selling song "Cry," recorded by Moore. ***Rogert Ebert***

Gretchen Barretto goes back to first love

GRETCHEN Barretto seems to be making waves again. After years of self-imposed hiatus, the woman with the most refreshing visage this side of show biz is back with a vengeance.

After lending her long, silky tresses for a brand of haircare product and showing her much sought-after visage on the small screen with occasional guesting and hosting stints, Gretchen recently returned to acting by joining the ABS-CBN soap series, "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," which stars younger sister Claudine.

The show got a suitable shot in the arm when Gretchen's character sauntered to the set to add much-needed drama and fire-works to an already convoluted and overwrought plot.

In the tradition of soap operas' surprising twists and turns, Gretchen delineates the role of Ronaldo Valdez's wife recently resurrected from the dead.

Discovered by Mother Lily when she was merely 14, Gretchen took show business by storm because of her youthful good looks. From her first movie outing in the teen flick "14, Going Steady" to her last film before she went on temporary leave, Gretchen amassed a multitude of admirers of both sexes.

For male audiences, she was the embodiment of feminine pulchritude, with her curvaceous figure and bedimpled smile, beguiling eyes and a pout that sent male hormones in a mad frenzy.

For women, she was glamour personified. Like Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly and Gloria Romero before her, Gretchen is known to possess a stylish dressing sensibility. She exudes class whether she's gliding the red carpet in a little black dress with a string of pearls on her neck or shopping in jeans and a simple white shirt.

IMAGE MODEL. Gretchen Barretto rekindles her affair with the fashion world.

While show business has made Gretchen an icon of sorts, it is not her career that puts a smile on her lips these days, but her reunion with her first love.

Having known her love since she was 12 years old, Gretchen recently decided to rekindle the affair. The object of her present affection, as Gretchen describes, is "simple, but classy and stylish."

But Gretchen is not taking pleasure in the thrill of another romance. She has simply returned to the fashion world by becoming an image model for a line of ultra hip and stylish outfits.

Gretchen explains, "In a way, the fashion world gave birth to me because I started as a junior fashion model when I was 12. The things that I learned back then from being a model helped a lot in developing a dressing sense and style that I can call my own. So let's just say that I've decided to go back to my first love."

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APRIL 23, 2002

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Gov't eyes new tax on cell phone firms

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance yesterday clarified that it was planning to impose a 5- to 7-percent gross receipts tax on revenues of mobile phone companies and not single out the text messaging system from the new impost.

Dubbed as computer education tax, earnings from the planned levy on gross receipts to be slapped on the cellular phone firms for both calls and text services would be used by the government to fund the computer literacy program for public schools, a ranking finance official said yesterday.

The intention, according to the official, was to collect the taxes from the phone companies alone and for the burden not to be passed on to consumers.

Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Telecoms dominate the mobile phone service in the country. Last year, Globe Telecom posted a net profit of P4.3 billion out of consolidated revenues of P35.8 billion. Smart, a subsidiary of PLDT, registered net earnings of P3.9 billion while its parent firm posted net profits of P3.4 billion out of consolidated revenues of P73.5 billion.

The finance official said the new tax, if approved by Congress, would allow the government to collect at least P2.5 billion from the cellular phone companies every year.

The money would be used to buy computers and provide training for educators to improve computer literacy particularly among public school children.

"Students from our public schools, even from the colleges and universities, were observed to be way below in computer literacy compared with their counterparts in other countries. We have to bridge the digital divide and we hope to do this through a computer education tax," the official said.

In a statement, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho also noted that the planned tax was "very preliminary." Camacho is in the United States attending a meeting sponsored by the International Monetary Fund.

"The tax on text messages was suggested to the DOF. In response, I directed my staff to study the matter. At this point, there is nothing more than a preliminary study going on to consider the appropriateness of this suggestion," the finance secretary explained.

The government imposes a 10-

GOV'T/ B3

Gov't to bid $300-M Luzon railway project

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT is planning to bid out within the year the $300-million Southern Luzon railway project shelved by original proponent Ayala Land Inc. with a fresh sweetener in the form of partial financial support to the build-operate-transfer (BOT) project.

ALI could still participate in the bidding for the railway project that was supposed to link Manila to the Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Quezon (Calabarzon) region, National Economic and Development Authority assistant deputy director general for infrastructure Ruben Reinoso told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The Manila-Calabarzon-Express (MCX) project was originally awarded to ALI, which had submitted an unsolicited proposal prior to the Asian financial crisis, but the company shelved the project over doubts on its viability without any government subsidy.

To make the MCX project attractive to the private sector, however, Reinoso said the government was willing to absorb part of the capital cost.

"The government can shoulder the civil works component, which will easily comprise 50 percent of the total project cost," Reinoso said.

But under a revised package with a subsidy component, Reinoso said ALI would no longer enjoy the right of first refusal and would have to participate in a public bidding if it still wanted to take part in the project.

The MCX project aims to improve the existing commuter lines of the Philippine National Railways in Metro Manila and extend it to the Calabarzon region. It involves the construction of a five-phase railway line, which would include the installation of signaling and communication systems, introduction of new locomotives, and passenger coaches.

Reinoso said multilateral lender Asian Development Bank, which had provided a technical assistance grant to study the reforms needed by the PNR, was interested to help the government with the MCX project.

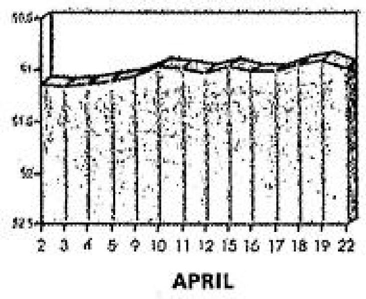
"They are willing to extend financing to fund capital cost but this, of course, will be tied to certain reforms," he said.

He said the government would be able to bid out the MCX project as soon as the ADB-funded study on PNR reforms has been completed within this year. He said that unlike an outright subsidiary, the government would have some recovery mechanism for its proposed capital infusion to MCX.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.970 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 22, 2002

¥130.15 = $1

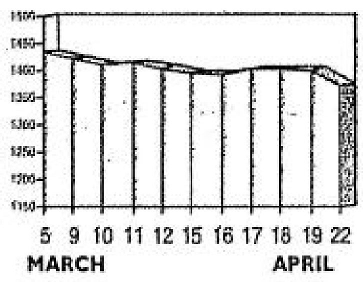
As of 5 p.m., April 22, 2002

GOLD: $302.80/303.40

per ounce Hong Kong,
April 22, 2002

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks end at 5-week low

STOCKS ended at a five-week low yesterday as investors took profits in selected blue chips such as heavyweight Bank of the Philippine Islands, traders said.

They said the market's decline was also partly due to jitters following a series of bomb attacks in the South.

The government said it would declare a state of emergency yesterday in the southern city of General Santos where weekend bomb blasts killed 14 people.

The declaration will give President Macapagal-Arroyo the power to order intensified military and police action against lawless elements.

"It's (bombings) becoming a major reason why the market corrected. It claimed lives, it makes people jittery, so you're bound to take profits," said Enrique Santa Ana, associate director for sales of DBS-Vickers Securities.

Reuters

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COUNTRY SHARES

As of April 23, 2002

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1.65M/1.7M *	-
ALTA VISTA A	300,000	325,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	750,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	75,000	95,000/105,000 *
CAMP JOHN HAY	265,000	-
CANLUBANG	500,000	-
CAPITOL HILLS	-	125,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	180,000	190,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B/C**	620,000 **	350,000/450,000/700,000 **
EVERCREST A/B*	135,000 *	100,000
FONTANA D/C*/S**	-	90,000/150,000/250,000 **
FOREST HILLS A/B/C**	200,000	230,000/300,000/325,000 **
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	250,000	270,000/300,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.55 M	2,000,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	650,000/730,000 *	700,000/750,000 *
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	120,000/125,000 *
MIMOSA IND./C2*	120,000/200,000 *	155,000/255,000 *
MT. MALARAYAT A/C*	-	350,000/525,000 *
ORCHARD A/B/C**	200,000	230,000/350,000/425,000 **
PUERTO AZUL	-	125,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	200,000	225,000
RIVIERA A/B*	-	195,000/400,000 *
ROCKWELL CLUB	-	500,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B/C**	-	90,000/150,000/180,000 **
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B/C**	-	150,000/250,000/350,000 **
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A/B*	2,100,000 *	-
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP*	290,000 *	200,000/350,000 *
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	- *	350,000/550,000 *
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS CC/GOLF*	400,000/500,000 *	425,000/550,000 *
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	750,000	785,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	150,000	170,000
VALLEY GOLF	230,000	-

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Tax and text

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IN an instant, I knew Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho would enforce martial law soon. How could he fool me? It was obvious in his plan to study a tax on text messages.

Reports just came out, quoting the "Whiz," which is his popular name in my family, the Department of Finance was doing the technical study on the tax—already!

That was the dead giveaway to his evil plan to impose another dictatorship upon the nation. For why would he want a technical study on a tax on text messages?

Don't tell me that he only wants to raise money for this cute administration. Sure, like all past administrations, it is short of funding. Nobody believes it's just the money.

As our ever-vigilant lawmakers have already said by studying the tax on text messages, the Whiz actually intends to suppress one of our fundamental rights.

And that is the freedom of expression. This precisely is even enshrined in the Constitution, which not even our lawmakers can amend just like that, but they want to.

* * *

SOME congressmen already got our problems pinned down. They have discovered, by holding seances throughout the country, that the Constitution is to blame for all our miseries.

It is the fault of the Constitution, for instance, that it does not even talk about pork. Thus, in the yearly budget, congressmen are forced to give themselves pork.

Since the Constitution has no single provision on pork to congressmen, it is clear we have to amend it. Maybe then they can make pork constitutional. All right!

I have no problem with Cha-cha if it covers only pork. It is dangerous only if, in the process, the Whiz sneaks in his plan to become a dictator through the tax on text.

In the past 10 years, we have already said we don't want any kind of Cha-cha. In every administration, there were people who accused the Constitution of causing us misery.

But we always said "not guilty." Had we not, imagine what could have happened. They could have already suppressed our freedom of expression by taxing text messages!

* * *

BUT today, according to some congressmen, support for Cha-cha is snowballing. They, nevertheless, forget to say, well, just exactly where it is snowballing.

So there are 200 plus congressmen and, assuming that all of them support Cha-cha—a hundred percent—they can actually force the Cha-cha upon 80 million of us.

Such a solid group of theirs means that the exercise has the blessing of an amazing 00.00003 percent of the population. In mathematics, that's almost zero.

Huh, so that's snowballing? Hellooo! I don't know if it is snowballing only in the minds of congressmen. Then it's more like a sexual fantasy. An orgy! All men!

Now Yoda Venecia is pledging his undying support for Gloriaetta. He says his candidate for president in 2004 is no other than his provincema . . . *este*, Gloriaetta.

In other words, unlike perhaps the Whiz, who is preparing the way for martial law by wanting a study on a tax on text messages, Yoda has no more ambition.

* * *

SOME people are saying that in pushing for the Cha-cha, Yoda must be up to something. He wants to become prime minister. And he can be one if we change the Constitution.

Unfortunately, Gloriaetta said she does not want anything to do with Yoda's version of the Cha-cha. She said she has other priorities like jobs, food and housing.

Gloriaetta does not want the Cha-cha. Yet Yoda, plus all those congressmen engaged in this group sex, will still push for it. What a solid support!

Is he supporting Gloriaetta by going against her? Yoda wants the Cha-cha. Gloriaetta says no to it. Yoda says, "So what?" That kind of undying solid support!

No wonder, nothing substantial is coming out of our Congress. Its biggest work was passing the budget for this year. Guess how much pork was in it!

But how does this cute administration raise money for the ever-growing congressional pork? Despite his name, the Whiz can't just use magic.

* * *

NO wonder the Whiz wants to become another dictator. Then he can raise all the money for the pork: for all our lawmakers. They don't want to pass any tax measure.

The first step in his devious plan is, of course, the tax on text messages. Certain lawmakers consider the tax as a curtailment of our freedom of expression.

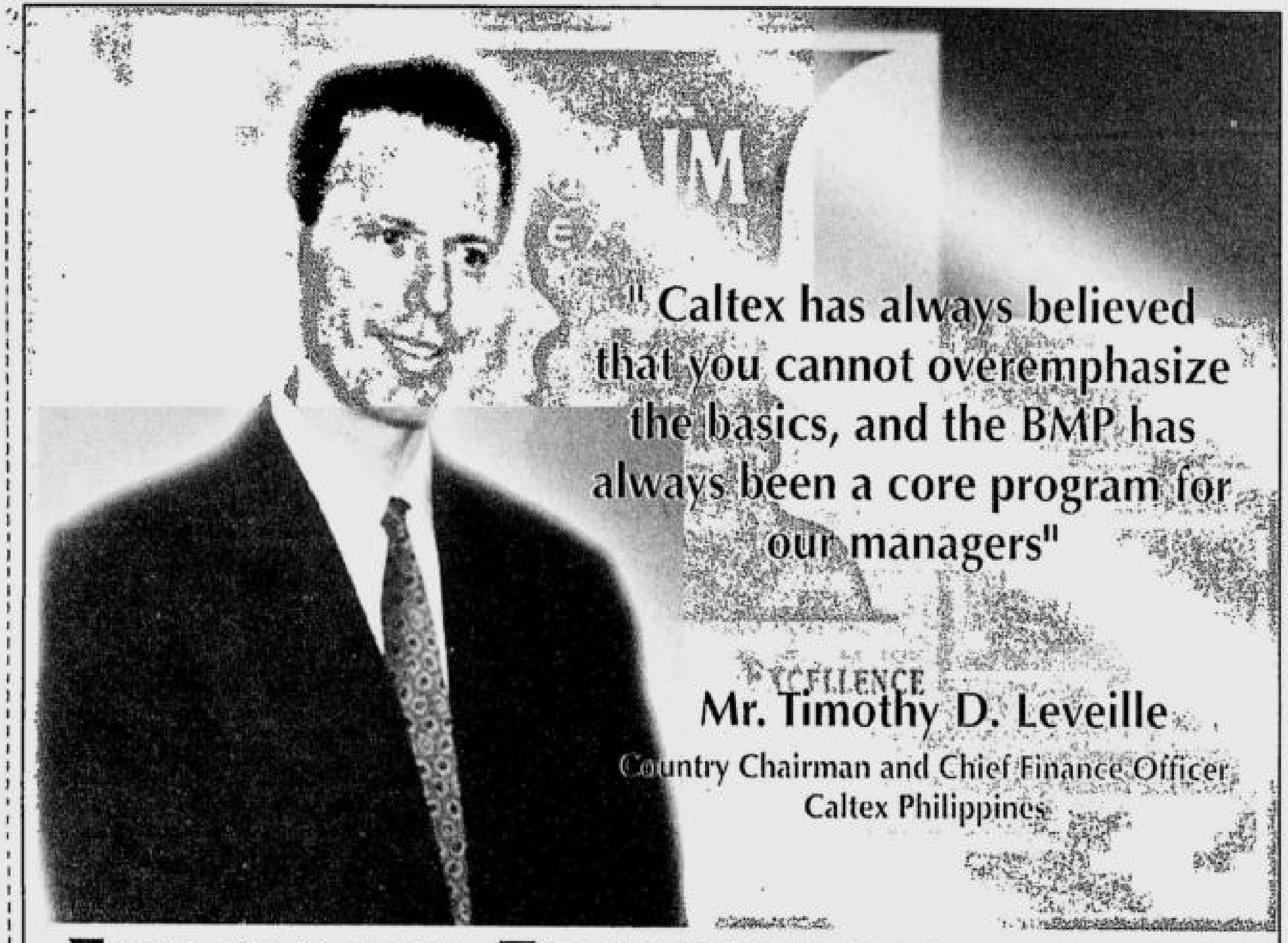
Estimates put the number of cellular phone users in this country at some 5 million. At only one text message a day each, that's a lot of freedom of expression.

For if the Whiz gets Congress to pass the tax on text messages, which is still under technical study, he stops the high-level democratic exercise called "pass it on."

That is a favorite in text messaging. It encourages an intelligent thorough discussion of great issues that affect our lives and our nation. Why tax it?

The tax weakens our democracy. We can no longer explore vital issues through the use of 50 text characters like "K." The tax will be the death of democracy!

Me, I will surely miss the ribald jokes—with the picture messages of male and female private parts and all. They're offensively nice!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Paper maker Intercontinental debuts as a publicly listed firm

PAPER manufacturing firm Intercontinental Paper Industries Inc. has gained entry into the Philippine Stock Exchange through the backdoor following the conclusion of a share-swap deal that has given it a majority stake in publicly listed Multitech Investments Corp.

In a disclosure yesterday, Multitech, formerly known as Armstrong Holdings Inc., said Intercontinental acquired 560 million of its shares equivalent to a majority stake in the company.

Multitech, in turn, bought its own majority stake in Intercontinental, a 14-year-old paper manufacturing firm.

Industry sources said Intercontinental—owned by the family of Phillip Co, which founded packaging firm Steniel Manufacturing Corp.—was embarking on an expansion binge, and that the backdoor listing was "the only way to go."

Multitech said in its disclosure that the decision to buy into Intercontinental was made after a "careful evaluation of various investment opportunities over the past two years."

It said Multitech decided to buy a majority stake because of "Intercontinental's reputation for high-quality premium products, strong position in the ruled paper market, established and extensive distributor network, strong supplier relationships, and strategically located mill and storage facilities."

With the conclusions of its share-swap deal with Intercontinental, Multitech's main business will now shift to paper manufacturing.

Multitech has not engaged in any significant business activity since 2000.

Multitech is a holding company with interests in trading, finance and electronic commerce.

Its shares were listed on the stock exchange in 1998 following its acquisition of a 20-percent stake in Armstrong Securities Inc.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BANKING GROUP LIMITED
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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
As of March 22, 2002

ASSETS		Amount
Cash and Cash Items	P	5,413,154.94
Due from Central Bank		3,194,991,430.01
Due from Other Banks		280,306,283.69
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		935,983,881.32
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		4,125,297,014.81
Equity Investments (Net)		2,579,850.00
Due from Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		1,835,821,445.76
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures and Equipments (Net)		14,689,059.30
Other Assets (Net). Others		120,005,532.37
TOTAL ASSETS	P	10,615,109,652.52
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	183,763,093.68
Savings Deposits		1,228,526,458.00
Time Deposits		3,022,204,590.60
Special/Other Deposits		7,873,935.00
Due to Central Bank		3,027,125.60
Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		5,411,486,710.60
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		829,134.10
Bills Payable		
Interbank Borrowings		5,117,673.24
Others		90,204,654.13
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		59,134.67
Other Liabilities		160,512,848.65
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	10,113,625,397.71
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		Amount
Assigned Capital	P	444,323,634.54
Other Capital Accounts		57,160,620.27
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	501,484,254.81
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	10,615,109,652.52
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	1,658,772,135.91
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		1,381,117,000.62
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		1,347,900,432.74
Other Contingent Accounts		6,058,542,992.76
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	10,446,332,562.23

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
HEAD OFFICE
As At 30 September 2001
In AUD Millions

Capital	5,259
Surplus	5,292
Profits	4,652
Total Deposits	104,874
Total Resources	155,493

Other Information

1.	Deposits of:		
	a. Government		nil
	b. Banks		403,265.60
	c. Trust Department		nil
2.	Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
	Prescribed Ratio	6% Small Ent. / 2% Medium Ent.	
	Actual Compliance	100% / 104%	
3.	Amount of Non-Performing Loans		140,123,381.00
4.	Ratio of Non-Performing loans to total loan portfolio		3.50%
5.	Amount of classified loans and other risk assets		149,190,322.00
6	General Provision for Loan Losses		38,662,307.40
7.	Specific Provision for Loan Losses		90,618,065.10
8.	Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Assigned Capital		25.45%
	Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Shareholder's Equity		18.66%
	Return on Equity (ROE) - Inclusive of Net Due to HO		5.00%
9.	Amount of DOSRI loans/advances		2,540,293.13
10.	Ratio of DOSRI loans/adv to total loans/advances		0.06%
11.	Amount of Past Due DOSRI loans /advances		nil
12.	Ratio of Past Due DOSRI loans/adv to total loan portfolio		nil
13.	"Net Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad" forms part of capital of Philippine Branch of foreign bank		3,475,665,264.68

*Amended to conform with Circular No. 206 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to All Banks dated November 29, 1999.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

WE, JOHNNY CO and KIM CHAN of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Org) Signed JOHNNY CO
General Manager and
Country Head

(Org) Signed KIM CHAN
Chief Operating Officer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 18 April 2002, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax Certificate No. 11917495, issued at Makati City, on February 21, 2002 and Passport No. E7046749, issued at Jakarta, Indonesia, on June 2, 1998.

(Sgd.) BENJAMIN B. MATA
NOTARY PUBLIC
Until Dec. 31, 2002
PTR No. 8463136N DTO
Date Issued January 2, 2002

Doc. No. 58
Book No. 13
Page No. XXV
Series of 2001

Private firm, PCA in coco tech deal

THE PHILIPPINE Coconut Authority has tapped the Sirawan Food Co. to commercialize the production and use of coconut flour and white coconut oil.

Under a memorandum of agreement signed by PCA Administrator Danilo Coronacion and Sirawan general manager Luz Consuelo Consunji, the PCA will transfer to Sirawan the production technology process it is developing at its Davao research center.

Sirawan will, in turn, spend about P20 million, "as it (will) shoulder the cost of transferring the equipment to its plant, (and) it has the task of packaging the products," Coronacion said in a statement issued yesterday.

The new technology that the PCA is developing is designed to produce high food-grade coconut residue.

Coronacion said the procedure had yet to pass the PCA's quality-control tests, and it would take a year of testing before it could be passed on to privately held companies.

He said Sirawan agreed to provide funding assistance to the PCA's technical staff working on the project.

The company has also agreed to should the costs of procuring raw materials, packaging, and other pre-operational and marketing expenses.

P875,000 PRICE TAG

Honda to launch own AUV

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. will unveil tomorrow the country's most expensive Asian utility vehicle (AUV)—the 2002 CR-V—which it hopes will boost its sagging sales and inject renewed interest in its product line.

Based on documents culled from the Board of Investments, HCPI has proposed to sell its new CR-V at P875,000 (manual transmission) and P925,000 (automatic transmission). The current AUV models range from P453,000 to P838,000 per unit.

The new CR-V will also be the first Honda model that would be allowed for commercial purposes such as taxis.

While HCPI has dominated the passenger car segment for the last six years, it has remained a poor third to Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. and Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. in overall sales because it did not have a strong bet in the commercial vehicle segment.

With Toyota set to retake the pole position in the passenger car segment this year, HCPI was hard-pressed to introduce an AUV to spark sales. The best-selling models in the industry are AUVs primarily the Toyota Tamaraw Revo, Mitsubishi Adventure and Isuzu Hi-Lander.

While the CR-V has topped the compact SUV market for years, recent price escalation (it currently retails at P1.3 million each) has narrowed down the price difference with a full-sized SUV and this has become a major disincentive to prospective buyers.

By adding 4 jump seats in the rear compartment and getting the BOI's nod to amend its registration, HCPI would be able to sell the new CR-V at a much lower price because of the tax exemption under the 10-seater rule. All vehicles are taxed based on their engine size except for vehicles with a seating capacity of at least 10.

The pricing and usage of the new CR-V were critical to HCPI's application to the Board of Investments to shift the registration of the CR-V, which was signed up as a sport utility vehicle in the same category as the Mitsubishi Pajero, Toyota Land Cruiser and Rav 4, Nissan Patrol, and Jeep Cherokee.

Thrift banks' NPL ratio rises to 12.67%

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BAD loans ratio of the country's more than 100 thrift banks worsened to 13.67 percent of total their loans in January from 12.03 percent in the previous month as the increase in soured loans outpaced the growth of the banks' loan portfolio.

Documents from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that the thrift banks' non-performing loans rose by 21.91 percent (or P3.7 billion) to P20.62 billion in January.

The increase in bad loans outpaced the 7.31 percent (P10.28 billion) rise in their loan portfolio to 150.81 billion. The thrift banks' bad loans stood at only 11.68 percent a year ago, or P15.48 billion of the P132.62 billion in total loans.

Taking the interbank loans out of the equation, the thrift banks' NPLs went up to 14.3 percent from 12.45 percent in December. Loans minus the interbank portfolio stood at P144.14 billion in January.

In the same period, the NPL ratio of the commercial banking system climbed anew to 18.3 percent from 17.35 percent in December.

The central bank noted that the coverage ratio of thrift banks in January had narrowed down to 47.35 percent from 51.13 percent a month ago as the rise in NPLs surpassed the 12.88-percent increase in loan-loss reserves. Coverage ratio indicates whether banks have enough reserves for possible loan defaults.

Gross restructured loans also went up by 4.24 percent to P3.81 billion or 2.53 percent of total loans, from P3.66 billion or 2.6 percent of total loans in December.

The BSP noted that the thrift banks' overall asset quality in January also deteriorated as the ratio of bad assets rose to 17.59 percent from 16.85 percent in December.

Gov't to halt sales of long-term T-bonds

THE BUREAU of Treasury has dropped sales of government bonds with five years maturity or more from its auction program for May and June, according to a circular to dealers.

The shortfall would be made up for by the issue of three- and four-year bonds, Treasury said.

The move comes after National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said on April 9 that the government would suspend sales of longer tenors unless bidding improved.

EDEZA

The government is concerned that rate declines at the long end of the yield curve in recent months have not matched sharp falls at the shorter end.

Higher rates cost the government more in its borrowings to finance the budget deficit, forecast by the government to reach P130 billion this calendar year.

The last auction of original issue five-year treasury bonds fetched a coupon of 13 percent on April 9. At the previous sale on March 21 reissued paper of the same tenor fetched the same rate.

By comparison the rate for benchmark 91-day treasury bills, used by banks for their loans pricing, fell to a historic low of 4.347 percent at the last auction on April 15.

Under the new schedule, the Treasury will offer P10 billion in two-, three- and four-year treasury bonds in May with the same amount to be auctioned in June.

At each auction, Treasury will offer P4 billion in two-year paper and P3 million each of three-year and four-year tenors.

Meantime, foreign direct investment in the Philippines fell 38.6 percent to $540.4 million last year, figures released by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed yesterday.

It did not give reasons for the fall but officials attributed it largely to domestic political problems, the weak global economic climate and falling exports in the region.

The central bank's figures also showed Japan and the United States as the largest source of foreign direct investment last year, with each pumping in nearly $193 million.

For Japan, this was a 92.5-percent jump from its investments in 2000 while the US figure was a 21.4-percent drop.

Singapore was third with $173.97 million, down by 47 percent, the central bank said.

Investment from Japan rose due to the high cost of doing business domestically, analysts said.

Reuters, AFP

SBMA approves 42 new projects worth ₱280M

THE SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) was able to tally more than P280 million in investments with the approval of 42 project proposals presented before the SBMA Board in the first three months of the year.

SBMA chair Felicito Payumo said that from January to March this year, the total new investments approved by SBMA included 18 new sub-lease agreements worth P64.6 million.

"The freeport remains an attractive site for investments as it offers not just factory place and other industrial estates but a total community with a safe and clean environment," Payumo said.

Among the new players in the freeport included Ecofriendly Equipment Corp., which has proposed to set up a remanufacturing plant for industrial equipment and machinery with committed investment amounting to P162 million.

Two other investors were The Foreign Language Inc., a Korean firm that will operate a language learning school to bridge the cultural gap among foreign investors and Filipino personnel with committed investment of P12 million, and Rodaluck Trading and Shipping Services Enterprises, which is investing P10 million in a ship-handling and other port services project.

Japanese firm Sinag Precision Fabricators Inc. will invest P12.5 million for the setting up of a manufacturing plant at the Subic Techno Park to supply parts of Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) being produced by another Japanese company, Omron Mechatronics.

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

HIGHLANDS PRIME
LEISURE PROPERTIES, INC.

Initial Public Offering
of 449,248,934 Common Shares
with par value of P1.00 per share
at an Offer Price of P2.13 per share
of which 93,896,714 shares were sold on a Primary basis
and 355,352,220 shares were sold on a Secondary basis

BDO Capital & Investment Corporation
Issue Manager and Lead Underwriter

Philippine Commercial Capital, Inc.
ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners, Inc.
Sub-Underwriters

Trading Participants of the Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc.
Selling Agents

23 April 2002

BPI bad loans ratio hits 13.98%

BANK of the Philippine Islands (BPI), the country's second largest bank, said yesterday that its non-performing loans stood at 13.98 percent for loans considered as past-due for at least 90 days as of March 22, higher than its end-2001 NPL ratio of 11.6 percent.

Despite the increase in its NPL ratio, BPI was still lower than the industry average of 18.4 percent as of February.

The bank said in its published statement of condition its NPL ratio for the parent bank alone was at 14.90 in the same period.

BPI said its NPLs for the period would be higher at 14.59 percent if loans past due for just 30 days would be included, as defined under a central bank circular.

BPI said its consolidated loan-loss reserves were equivalent to 57.53 percent of its NPLs, defined as past due for over 90 days for the period, while its return on equity was at 10.76 percent.

BPI slid P5.50 or 7.33 percent partly due to its report of a higher NPL ratio, traders said. The bank pulled down the financial sector sub-index, which fell 27.97 points or 4.74 percent to 561.88 points.

Reuters

Tax on 'texting' difficult to impose, says NTC chief

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT may have the power to tax text messages, but that does not mean it is feasible to do so.

It would be difficult to impose a tax on text messages, both from the consumers' and the telecom firms' standpoint, National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) chief Eliseo Rio Jr. said in an interview yesterday.

He explained that based on the NTC's experience with the reduction of free text messages, the public would certainly raise a howl should the Department of Finance (DOF) push its plan to tax text messages.

"Based on our experience with the reduction of free text, there was much public clamor. The public outcry then was not even sustained because the public must have thought P1 per message was reasonable enough," Rio said.

"But reducing free text messages is one thing. Raising the rate per message is a different story," he added.

However, Rio admitted that any form of tax was under the DOF and was outside the jurisdiction of both the NTC and the Department of Transportation and Communications.

"It's a DOF initiative outside of the DOTC and the NTC. The DOF can come up with tax schemes to raise revenues for the government (even without consulting concerned government agencies)," he said.

But as with any new tax, DOF Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho's proposal to tax text messages would have to go through Congress and Senate.

If the DOF's plan would actually be pursued, Rio said both Houses would need to call public hearings for oppositors to air their side.

"If the NTC's opinion will be asked then, based on the text reduction issue, P1 is more or less a difficult figure to raise at this time. If you charge more than P1, there'll be a big outcry," he said.

Gov't eyes new tax . . .

From page B1

percent value-added tax on domestic services of the phone firms and another 10-percent overseas communication tax for handling international telecom services.

Like all companies, cellular phone firms are also subject to the 32-percent corporate income tax.

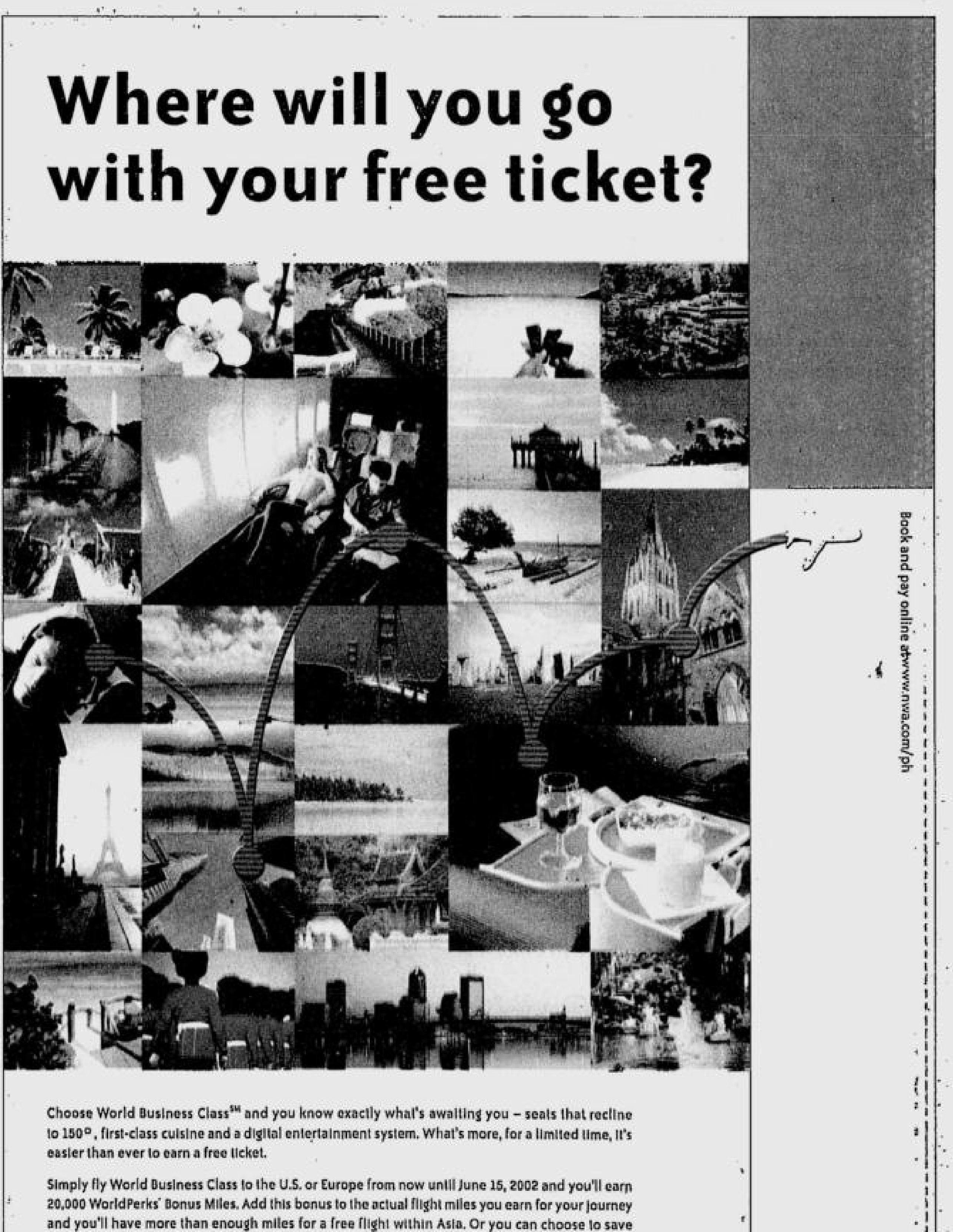
"The government is trying to work out a system wherein the phone companies need not pass on the cost to consumers," said a finance official.

Globe and Smart currently charge between P1 and P2.50 for every text message sent. Text messages reach as much as 150 million daily from more than 12 million mobile phone subscribers in the country.

A 5-percent tax on text messages alone would give the government revenues of about P2.7 billion annually.

A proposal to tax text messages was raised during a congressional hearing last year but it was met with stiff opposition form consumers.

Under the current setup, Camacho said last week that the tax on text messaging service was already lumped with other services. He said the government could impose a separate tax on text messaging since the service was unbundled from other items like phone calls.



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GOLFERS CLUB SHARES, INC.
SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF APRIL 22, 2002

		SELLING	BUYING
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,700,000	
2.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,750,000	1,700,000
3.	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	650,000
4.	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	100,000	80,000
5.	CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	250,000
6.	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	
7.	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	130,000	120,000
8.	CELEBRITY CLUB	190,000	175,000
9.	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS		370,000
10.	CLUB FILIPINO	210,000	200,000
11.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	200,000	
12.	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	350,000	330,000
13.	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	
15.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	280,000	
16.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	
17.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	280,000	250,000
18.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000	
19.	MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	10,500,00
20.	MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,050,000
21.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	650,000	620,000
22.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	750,000	700,000
23.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	140,000	100,000
24.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	330,000
26.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	230,000	200,000
27.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
28.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	370,000	
29.	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000	200,000
30.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	210,000
32.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1,800,000
33.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	250,000	
34.	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		850,000
35.	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND		750,000
36.	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	150,000
37.	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	240,000	200,000
38.	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		8,500,000

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PAUL CORTEZ PRESIDENT
LALA SALAO / LYDIA HASEGAWA
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Sumitomo trims stake in BPI

By E.R. Torrijos

SUMITOMO Mitsui Banking Corp. of Japan has reduced its stake in Bank of the Philippine Islands to roughly 7 percent from 8.24 percent yesterday.

BPI said that it was Sumitomo that sold the bulk of 24.512 million BPI shares at P67 each or a total of P1.6 billion through block sales done at the Philippine Stock Exchange. The buyer or buyers were not known.

The total shares that changed hands represented about 1.55 percent of the total 1.581 billion shares of BPI outstanding.

JP Morgan was the broker for the P1.6 billion in block sales.

Sources said the P67 share price was below the recently prevailing market price of BPI shares because the transaction had actually been agreed upon about two months ago, when the price of BPI shares hovered at that level.

Apart from the block sales, 144,600 BPI shares were also crossed at the PSE by BPI Securities.

As a result of the transactions and because of negative market sentiment as a result of the bomb explosions in General Santos City that killed 14 and injured around 60, the price of BPI shares closed P5.50 lower from yesterday's close at P69.5 per share.

BPI is the country's second largest bank. As of the end of last year, Ayala Corp., the flagship holding company of the Zobel de Ayala family, directly owned a 25-percent stake in BPI; Ayala DBS Holdings, 21.43 percent; and PCD nominees, 21.5 percent.

G & W clubshares
SBC License Broker No.: A-17597
As of April 23, 2002

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A"	1,700,000	-
Alabang Country Club "B"	1,800,000	-
Alta Vista	-	300,000
Baguio Country Club	740,000	650,000
Camp John Hay	280,000	200,000
Capitol Hills Golf & CC	130,000	115,000
Canyon Woods	200,000	160,000
Calatagan Golf Club	100,000	-
Celebrity Sports Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
City Sports Club	830,000	Pls. Call
Eagleridge "A"	350,000	-
Eastridge	200,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	-
Fairways & Blue Waters	600,000	-
Fontana D/C	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Forest Hills "A"	230,000	210,000
Forest Hills "C"	280,000	240,000
Manila Golf	-	9,500,000
Manila Polo	-	2,600,000
Makati Sports Club	300,000	280,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	660,000	620,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	Pls. Call
Metropolitan Club	-	90,000
Mimosa Golf Ind./C3*	190,000/300,000*	120,000/275,000*
Mt. Malarayat	360,000	-
Orchard	230,000	210,000
Phil. Columbian	80,000	60,000
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Puerto Azul "B"	170,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	240,000	190,000
Riviera Golf "A"/"C"	200,000/450,000*	-
Riviera Golf "B"	250,000	-
Rockwell	-	370,000
Royale Tagaytay A/C	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Sherwoods	110,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	400,000	330,000
Subic Golf	150,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	450,000	380,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	-	850,000
Tagaytay Midlands	800,000	750,000
Valley Golf & CC	-	230,000
Valle Verde (Indv.)	175,000	160,000
Wack Wack Golf	7,000,000	6,800,000

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Sy lists leisure property company

HIGHLANDS Prime becomes the newest company in the leisure property sector of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) as it gets listed today, with Highlands chair Henry Sy Sr. leading the listing ceremony.

The firm has offered and fully sold a total of 449.25 million common shares with a par value of P1 per share at an initial public offering (IPO) price of P2.13 per share.

The offerings yielded P906 million in net proceeds. The shares offered represent 20 percent of the company's issued and outstanding shares.

Sy said that he aimed to develop Highlands' properties into a world-class leisure and tourism destination in Asia and that discussions and work on its properties in Tagaytay were underway.

The company has about 534 hectares of land in Tagaytay, Cavite; Calamba, Laguna; and Talisay, Batangas. These will be developed into high-end residential and leisure properties.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **Ayala Corp.** were Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Ariston Estrada Jr., Mercedita Nolledo, Minoru Makiharu and Naoyuki Nobe. Also, the company shall reclassify its unissued 400 million common X shares with a par value of P10 per share into 4 billion common shares with par value of P1 per share. Its unissued 2 billion preferred AA shares shall also be reclassified into 2 billion preferred A shares.

* * *

MEDCO Holdings Inc. postponed its annual stockholders' meeting originally scheduled for May 10.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.** were Ramon del Rosario, Oscar Hilado, Magdaleno Albarracin Jr., Urs Bieri, Jose Cuisia Jr., Jeremy Maycock, Jorge de Leon, Ramon del Rosario Jr., Victor del Rosario, Noel Vasquez and Felipe Alfonso.

* * *

CYBER Bay Corp. announced the resignation of Lorenzo Tan as director and treasurer of the company following his appointment as president and CEO of **Philippine National Bank.** *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 22, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	74.5	74.5	69.5	69.5	2,153,100
China Banking Corp.	635	635	635	635	2,720
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39	37	37.5	321,600
First E-Bank Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	20,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40.5	41	39	40.5	390,800
Phil. Bank of Comm.	100	100	100	100	100
Philippine National Bank	55	55	55	55	1,100
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	29	28.5	29	7,700
Security Bank Corp.	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	11,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	22	22.5	22	22.5	68,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	260,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	290,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	229	229	229	229	200
Manulife Financial Corp.	1415	1430	1415	1430	8,160
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1100	1125	1085	1120	6,670
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	2,500
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.62	0.63	3,540,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	805	805	805	21,610
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	490	490	477.5	480	232,100
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	25,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	28.5	28.5	28	28	21,600
Manila Electric Co. B	47.5	47.5	45.5	46.5	1,739,100
Petron Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.64	1,167,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.56	1.6	1.56	1.6	166,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	120,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.85	2.85	2.75	2.8	2,136,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.38	610,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.63	0.66	0.63	0.66	130,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	178,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13	13	13	13	29,200
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	25.5	28	25	27.5	3,692,500
RFM Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.3	2,363,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	158,000
San Miguel Corp. B	57	57	55.5	55.5	214,700
Universal Robina Corp.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	369,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.6	6.6	6.3	6.3	2,417,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.11	15,020,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.1	2.12	2.08	2.08	766,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.54	250,000
APC Group Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	42,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	73,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	120,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.62	0.64	3,550,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	460,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	7	7	7	7	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.34	1.36	1,472,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	30	30	29.5	29.5	214,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	10,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	640,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	250,000
Ionics Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	3,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.84	1,030,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	700,000
Music Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	220,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	100,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.25	3.25	5,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	700,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.6	5.3	3.6	5.3	43,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	60,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
Pryce Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12	12	11.75	12	22,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.58	0.61	0.56	0.61	10,840,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	340,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.25	0.28	640,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	1,490,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34.5	35	34	34	145,200
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	770	770	770	770	2,670
Equitable PCI Bank-War	0.89	0.89	0.85	0.89	160,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	790	790	790	790	11,000
Jollibee Warrants	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	10,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	2,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	17,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.3	6,059,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	3,230,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,630,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.48	2.55	17,217,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
SM Development Corp.	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.99	140,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	7,359,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	7,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.044	0.044	7,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	30,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	6,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	21,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	6,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	7,000,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.013	8,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	700,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	28,055,950	1,843,832,950.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	194,757,480	423,216,875.00
PRO	36,645,000	136,279,000.00
Mining	41,850,000	500,850.00
OIL	23,700,000	213,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	325,008,430	2,404,043,075.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	567.10	DOWN 22.75
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,852.30	DOWN 25.14
PRO	622.04	DOWN 4.08
Mining	1,303.99	DOWN 32.67
OIL	1.55	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	766.28	UP 5.11
Composite	1,373.79	DOWN 27.57

NO. OF ADVANCES: 15; NO. OF DECLINES: 43; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 46; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 104; NO. OF TRADES: 2,868

CURRENCIES

April 22, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.121076	1.000000	50.8850
Japan	Yen	0.008603	0.007674	0.3905
United Kingdom	Pound	1.623879	1.448500	73.7069
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.143741	0.128217	6.5243
Switzerland	Franc	0.681920	0.608273	30.9520
Canada	Dollar	0.713607	0.636537	32.3902
Singapore	Dollar	0.615807	0.549300	27.9511
Australia	Dollar	0.604028	0.538793	27.4165
Bahrain	Dinar	2.973835	2.652661	134.9807
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.298954	0.266667	13.5694
Brunei	Dollar	0.613179	0.546956	27.8319
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000120	0.000107	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.025902	0.023105	1.1757
UAE	Dirham	0.305238	0.272272	13.8546
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000768	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.892000	45.3894
Brazil	Real	0.481976	0.429923	21.8766
Denmark	Kroner	0.134494	0.119969	6.1046
India	Rupee	0.022963	0.020483	1.0423
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.295020	0.263158	13.3908
Mexico	New Peso	0.121001	0.107933	5.4922
New Zealand	Dollar	0.500234	0.446209	22.7053
Norway	Kroner	0.121415	0.117222	5.9648
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018715	0.016694	0.8495
South Africa	Rand	0.100907	0.000768	0.0391
Sweden	Kroner	0.109224	0.097428	4.9576
Syria	Pound	0.025479	0.022727	1.1565
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032215	0.028736	1.4622
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001333	0.001189	0.0605

CHINABANK

CHINA BANKING CORPORATION
8745 Paseo de Roxas corner Villar St., Makati City

A full-service, universal bank serving you thru 138 branches and 155 ATMs nationwide

Celebrating 81 years of service since 1920

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of MARCH 22, 2002

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items		₱ 937,706,020
Due from Bangko Sentral		1,698,754,193
Due from Other Banks		2,072,914,133
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,282,050,000
Trading Accounts Securities (Net)		4,277,235,494
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		27,479,449,176
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		35,603,477,965
Equity Investments (Net)		168,184,440
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		2,984,317,010
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,312,522,884
Others		4,457,692,189
TOTAL ASSETS		₱85,184,383,484
LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits		₱ 7,501,422,590
Savings Deposits		27,924,112,774
Time Deposits		28,211,142,177
Special/Other Deposits		180,264,429
Due to Bangko Sentral		39,008,979
Due to Banks		1,088,863
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		130,720,815
Bills Payable		4,107,920,722
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		537,687,921
Other Liabilities		3,187,305,612
TOTAL LIABILITIES		₱71,820,674,882
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		₱ 3,209,289,026
Surplus		8,037,784,363
Surplus Reserves		271,708,478
Other Capital Accounts		1,844,926,735
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱ 13,363,708,602
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱ 85,184,383,484
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		₱ 2,167,696,223
Bills for Collection		346,628,450
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		7,751
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		6,619,186,436
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		25,966,785,137
Invested in:		
Government Securities	₱14,927,800,494	
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	961,301,309	
Loans and Discounts	2,522,955,784	
Other Assets	7,554,727,550	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	22,868,043,278	
Common Trust Funds	624,541,531	
Investment/Fund Management	2,381,542,811	
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	92,657,517	
Other contingent accounts		2,363,020,552
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		₱ 37,463,324,549

OTHER INFORMATION:
1. Deposits of:
A) Government ₱ 8,916,994
B) Banks 170,616,630
C) Trust department 9,541,916
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:

Prescribed Ratio of Compliance	*6% For Small Ent.*	*2% For Medium Ent.*
Actual Compliance	200%	663%

3. Amount of non-performing loans 5,869,842,085
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio 14.31%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets 10,789,580,693
6. General provision for loan losses 673,066,535
7. Specific provision for loan losses 2,454,485,600
8. Return on Equity 8.30%
9. DOSRI loans/advances 2,739,175,112
10. Ratio to total loan portfolio 6.68%
11. Past due DOSRI loans/advances 14,828,746
12. Ratio to total loan portfolio 0.04%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES } S. S.
CITY OF MAKATI

We, RICARDO R. CHUA and PETER S. DEE, of the above mentioned Bank, do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) RICARDO R. CHUA
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer

(Sgd.) PETER S. DEE
President &
Chief Executive Officer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME this April 17, 2002, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 02077204 issued at Makati on January 11, 2002 and Residence Certificate No. 17405864 issued at Manila on February 21, 2002, respectively.

Doc. No. 466
Page No. 95
Book No. 9
Series of 2002

(Sgd.) NOLAN C. CASIDING
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2003
PTR No. 6744362 Makati 1/10/02
TIN 125-400-632

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of MARCH 22, 2002

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items		₱ 941,030,565
Due from Bangko Sentral		1,698,754,193
Due from Other Banks		2,072,914,133
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,282,050,000
Trading Accounts Securities (Net)		4,277,235,494
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		27,552,341,950
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		35,603,477,965
Equity Investments (Net)		116,684,440
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		2,984,575,820
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,312,522,863
Others		4,488,283,374
TOTAL ASSETS		₱85,229,870,797
LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits		₱ 7,501,422,590
Savings Deposits		27,924,112,774
Time Deposits		28,211,142,177
Special/Other Deposits		180,264,429
Due to Bangko Sentral		39,008,979
Due to Banks		1,088,863
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		130,720,815
Bills Payable		4,107,920,722
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		560,206,948
Other Liabilities		3,210,273,898
TOTAL LIABILITIES		₱71,866,162,195
Minority Interest in Subsidiary		₱ 0
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		₱ 3,209,289,026
Surplus		8,037,784,363
Surplus Reserves		271,708,478
Other Capital Accounts		1,844,926,735
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱13,363,708,602
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		₱85,229,870,797
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		₱ 2,167,696,223
Bills for Collection		346,628,450
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		7,751
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		6,619,186,436
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		25,966,785,137
Invested in:		
Government Securities	₱14,927,800,494	
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	961,301,309	
Loans and Discounts	2,522,955,784	
Other Assets	7,554,727,550	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	22,868,043,278	
Common Trust Funds	624,541,531	
Investment/Fund Management	2,381,542,811	
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	92,657,517	
Other contingent accounts		2,363,020,552
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		₱37,463,324,549

OTHER INFORMATION:
1. Deposits of:
A) Government ₱ 8,916,994
B) Banks 170,616,630
C) Trust Department 9,541,916
2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries
A) CBC FOREX CORPORATION
B) CBC INSURANCE BROKERS, INC.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES } S. S.
CITY OF MAKATI

We, RICARDO R. CHUA and PETER S. DEE, of the above mentioned Bank, do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) RICARDO R. CHUA
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer

(Sgd.) PETER S. DEE
President &
Chief Executive Officer

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(Sgd.) NOLAN C. CASIDING
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2003
PTR No. 6744362 Makati 1/10/02
TIN 125-400-632

Your success is our business

MEMBER: BancNet & PDIC (Maximum insurance deposit for each depositor - P 100,000.00)

Banks press housing agency to pay P7B

By Clarissa S. Batino

SOME banks are pressing state-run Home Guaranty Corp. to cough up about P7 billion to pay maturing debts that the government has incurred to finance several housing-related projects.

Home Guaranty, one of the agencies to be consolidated by the government under a planned Department of Housing, guaranteed asset pool certificates issued by the government to banks in previous years. Most of the certificates were about to mature, said a government source.

A banking source said among the banks that bought these certificates and were now asking to be paid were Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Philippine National Bank and Union Bank of the Philippines.

The maturing debt papers are part of the P10 billion to P12 billion that Home Guaranty has guaranteed to support the government's mass housing projects.

While meant for mass housing projects alone, some of the proceeds raised from the debt papers have financed projects unrelated to housing.

Among these projects are the rehabilitation of the Andres Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan and construction of villas at the Subic Freeport Zone used to house delegates of the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference held in the country under the Ramos administration.

A government source said the funds also financed the rehabilitation of the Smokey Mountain dump and construction of "Pabahay sa Riles" housing units.

Home Guaranty, however, is cash-strapped, and the national government may be forced to shoulder the P7-billion burden.

A government source, however, stressed that the payment for the maturing certificates was not part of the state's programmed spending for the year. He warned that forcing the government to pay up could bloat the government's deficit this year from an estimated P130 billion.

While the government has approved a P7-billion re-capitalization of Home Guaranty, only P900 million has been allocated under this year's budget.

NTC to unveil new scheme replacing service area rules

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission is set to issue by June a new set of requirements that will replace the existing landline rollout obligations of telecommunication firms.

"The (Department of Transportation and Communications) has already said 'yes' to the new scheme. It's not formal yet, but there was an indication that they agreed for a non-landline compliance," NTC chief Eliseo Rio Jr. said in an interview yesterday.

Rio said the commission was working on putting equivalent costs to other telecommunication facilities that could be rolled out instead of landlines.

A certain number of cell sites installed in an area, for instance, will have an amount equivalent to a specific number of landlines installed in the area.

"We'll be coming up with a formula on how to compute that amount. What's important is that the service (the telecommunication firms) will roll out will have basic voice and data," Rio stressed.

Telecommunication firms that will roll out any form of service to unprofitable areas will get equivalent incentives, he added.

This may be in the form of a certificate of public convenience and necessity, or CPCN, that telecommunication firms need to continue its business in the country.

Rio said this would be a good incentive, as it could help attract investors.

He explained that a CPCN had to be renewed every three years, and an investor had no assurance whether a telecom firm would get a renewal of its license or not.

The CPCN, however, will also contain certain conditions that the telecommunication firms will have to comply with. Rolling out services in unserved areas will be one of those conditions.

"Right now, we're planning a five-year compliance period to go to unserved areas. This is to promote universal access," Rio said.

SEC set to form team to review audited financial statements

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is set to form a team to review audited financial statements of the country's 233 listed companies and see if these statements comply with its accounting rules.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista told reporters yesterday that the commission was looking to enlist the help of experts from the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines and the University of the Philippines' College of Business Administration.

"We want them (experts) to evaluate the financial statements (of listed companies), look at them more closely, particularly those who have subsidiaries or are subsidiaries themselves," Bautista said.

Bautista said even if a listed company did not own 51 percent of a unit but nevertheless had control over it, it should include the unit in the consolidated financial statements it was filing annually with the SEC.

She said in some cases, consolidated financial statements suffered from double counting in the recognition of assets, liabilities and stockholders' equity.

Audited financial statements should follow "Rule 68" and other accounting rules of the SEC, Bautista stressed.

The SEC chief noted that violation of the SEC's rules could be considered a criminal offense.

The commission's implementing rules and regulations for the Securities Regulation Code require stock corporations with a paid-up capital of at least P50,000 to have an independent certified public accountant audit their financial statements.

Also, the SEC's amended Rule 68 provides the form and content of financial statements filed with the commission that are prepared and presented in line with generally accepted accounting principles.

The SEC has also required listed companies to choose only external auditors that it has accredited and to replace their auditors every three years.

The commission has been issuing tighter accounting rules to promote corporate governance and prevent the occurrence of an Enron Corp.-like collapse in the country.

Bautista said earlier the SEC was considering other measures to ensure the credibility of financial statements of listed companies.

These include raising the bar for chief financial officers and other officials responsible for submitting financial reports of listed companies and requiring a separate audit review and opinion for transactions worth 10 to 15 percent of the total capital of companies involved in conflict-of-interest cases.

Maynilad says it won't pay fees until November

By Christine A. Gaylican

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. has said it will be unable to pay concession fees to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System until November this year.

The company said it has been encountering delays in securing $350 million in fresh loans from its creditors that it plans to use to pay fees it owes the MWSS.

Maynilad, a company under the financially troubled Lopez group of companies, already owes the MWSS some P3 billion in concession fees.

The MWSS has temporarily assumed responsibility for Maynilad's debt payments.

Maynilad is hoping to conclude a deal with its creditors by November, according to company president Rafael Alunan III.

Alunan disclosed in an interview last week that Maynilad had signed a resolution with the MWSS' board of trustees.

"It is stated in a resolution to the effect that the MWSS board recognizes the fact that because rate rebasing was not completed in time, they have effectively moved the deadline to Nov. 30," he told reporters.

Maynilad offered in an earlier resolution to resume paying its concession fees this month and begin covering its arrears in June.

"We have an understanding with the government that, as soon as we have obtained our term loans, all our arrears will be fully paid, plus whatever charges it may have incurred," Alunan said.

He said should Maynilad secure $350 million in loans in November, it would start paying its arrears by December.

MWSS administrator Orlando Hondrade said the agency no longer had enough funds to support its administrative expenses and maturing obligations.

He said the MWSS had been acquiring bond placements worth about P3 billion with Banco de Oro Universal Bank since last year.

Hondrade said the MWSS badly needed this credit line, as it was running the risk of defaulting on its payments to creditors that included the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

The MWSS arranged to secure some P2 billion in bond securities from Banco de Oro this month.

In October last year, the agency obtained a credit of P1 billion from the same bank.

Hondrade said the Department of Finance had already endorsed the MWSS' request for a sovereign guarantee for its borrowings.

The MWSS earlier attempted to use Maynilad's $200-million performance bond.

Maynilad, however, was able to secure a court order that prevented the MWSS from touching this bond.

The MWSS decided instead to turn to local banks to raise money it needed to settle debts it owed to various multilateral funding agencies.

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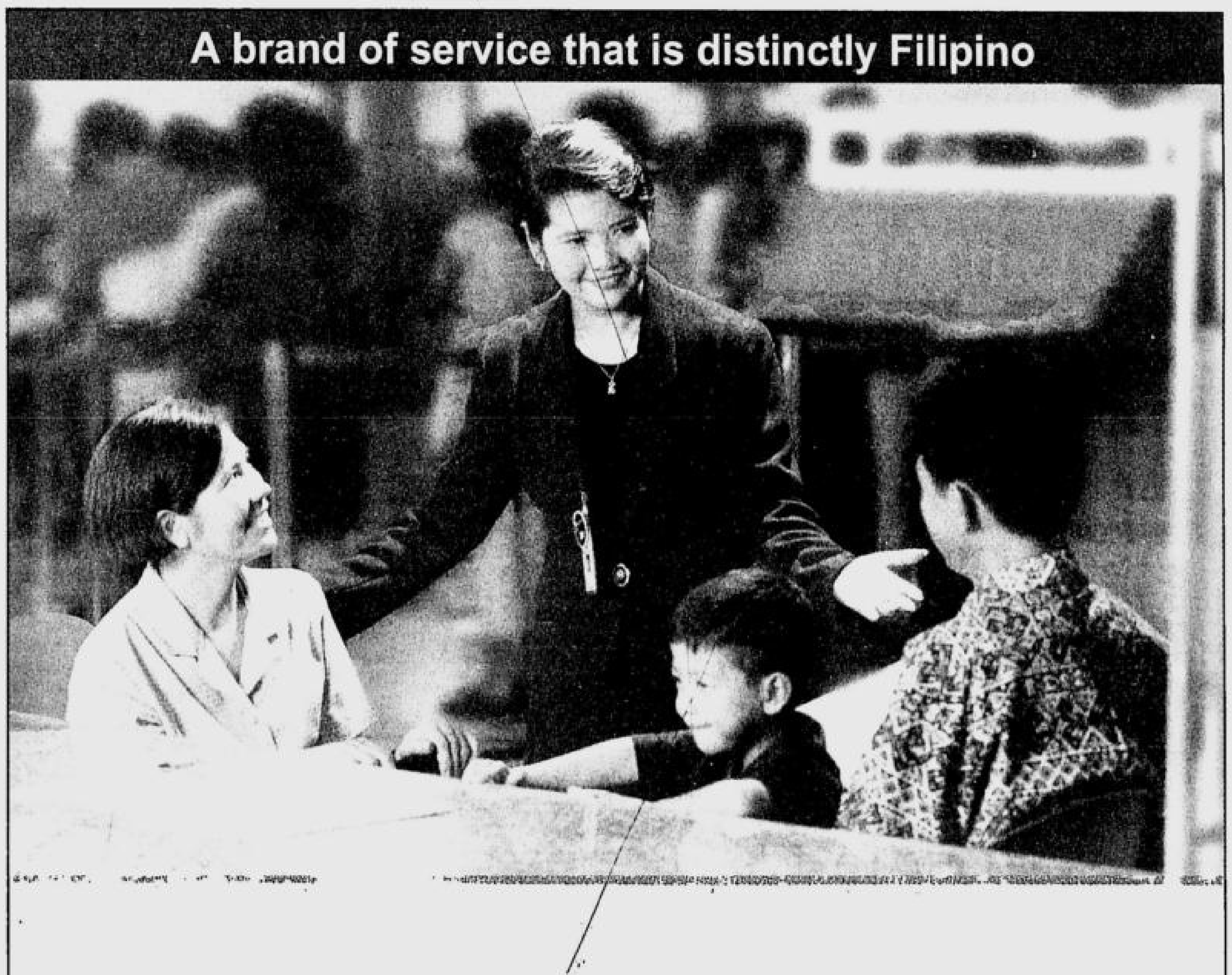

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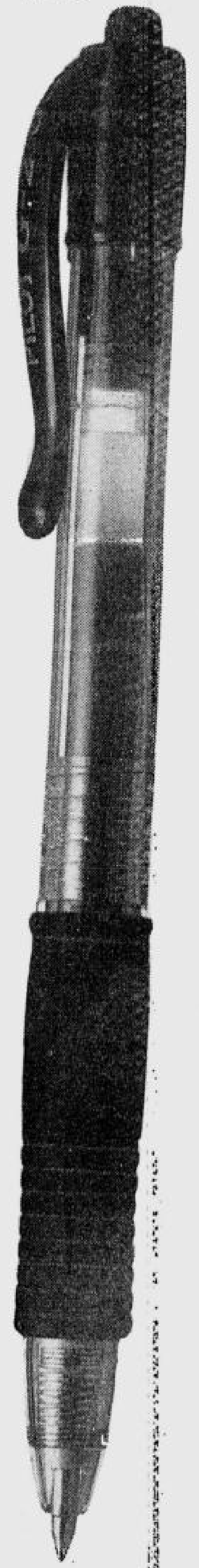

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ECONOMIC FORECAST

Gov't urged to focus on structural problems

By Josef T. Yap

TWO key events circumscribed the performance of the global economy in 2001. One was a synchronized deceleration, particularly in industrialized economies, that was broader and deeper than expected. And two was the aggravation of the economic downturn by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

The global economic slowdown was led by the United States, which was officially declared in recession in November 2001. Excess capacity brought about by the boom in the information, communication and telecommunication (ICT) sector led to a sharp fall in investment spending. The European Union has been hobbled by inflationary pressure, which kept a lid on consumer spending. The weak euro, higher fuel prices and the rise in food prices that stemmed from the prolonged effects of animal epidemics contributed to the increase in inflation.

Japan's economy, for its part, continues to be mired in a decade-old slump. Weak exports, anemic consumer spending and the muted response to the government's pump-priming measures are the primary factors behind the recession last year. Of course, the EU and Japan were both affected by the slowdown of the US economy.

Emerging market economies were naturally affected by these developments but to varying degrees. The economies that are more dependent on trade and have greater integration with the world economy experienced sharper slowdowns. For example, Singapore's gross domestic product (GDP) is likely to have contracted last year due to the dominance of the external sector in its economic activity. The Philippines was spared the harshest effects because of the dichotomy between its export sector and the domestic economy. However, other factors constrained her economic growth.

Worst over

Many analysts believe that the worst is over and the global economy should recover in 2002. However, the timing and extent of the recovery has been adversely affected by the Sept. 11 attacks.

The latest forecasts of the International Monetary Fund (December 2001) show lower growth for 2001 and 2002 for all industrialized economies compared to the forecasts published in October 2001. The US economy is expected to lead the recovery due mainly to the impact of the monetary and fiscal stimulus which have been initiated. Inventories are expected to be used up and business investment should recover.

The economic deceleration that began in the fourth quarter of 2000 continued into the first three quarters of 2001, with the country's GDP growth falling to 2.9 percent in that period, compared to 4 percent for the entire 2000. However, a surprising surge in the fourth quarter of 2001 lifted output growth above the revised government target of 3.3 percent for 2001. While this beats the forecasts of foreign analysts—ranging from 2.4 to 2.9 percent—the GDP growth for the whole year of 3.4 percent is still lower than that of 2000.

Many factors contributed to the lower output growth in 2001. The global economic downturn and Sept. 11 attacks had adverse effects on trade, consumer and investor confidence, and the performance of specific sectors, particularly tourism. Added to these are the burgeoning fiscal deficit, capital outflows, higher inflation and continued weak private investment.

Farm sector growth

Strong agriculture growth carried the economy in the first and last quarters of 2001. Buoyed by good weather all year long, this sector grew by 3.9 percent in 2001. In the second quarter, the slack in growth was picked up by the turnaround in the construction sector. The latter expanded by 6.6 percent in that three-month period after five quarters of near-zero growth or decline. The rebound, however, is hardly encouraging since it was due to a surge in public construction, which, in turn, was largely attributable to only one large government project. For the whole year, construction expanded by only 0.7 percent, which is, however, an improvement over the 5 percent contraction in 2000.

The export crunch had an unfavorable impact on manufacturing sector activity, pulling down growth to 2.2 percent last year from 5.6 percent in 2000. This filtered into the entire industry sector, the value added growth of which fell from 3.9 percent in 2000 to only 1.9 percent last year.

A FARM land in southern Philippines. Agriculture is expected to be affected by the El Niño weather disturbance and should grow by 2 percent, derailing the recovery of the food manufacturing sector.

The service sector was spurred by value added in transport, communications and storage, which grew by 8.9 percent. The retail trade sector experienced a slightly higher growth, lending support to legislation that liberalized regulations governing this sector. Overall, growth in the service sector declined slightly from 4.4 percent in 2000 to 4.3 percent last year. It should be noted that the production sector was hardest hit by the financial crisis—private sector construction, finance, and real estate—continue to be mired in a slump.

Sluggish investments

Despite the resolution of the political crisis in the first half of 2001 and the fall in interest rates throughout the year, private sector investment has not returned to the pre-crisis level and has remained sluggish. Investments in durable equipment contracted by 2.7 percent last year after expanding by 3.6 percent in 2000.

Private construction continued to shrink, falling by 0.7 percent in 2001. Only the increase in public construction and growth in the 'Breeding Stock and Orchard Development' category prevented further slippage in total fixed investment, which contracted by 0.6 percent. A sharp improvement in inventory pushed total capital formation up by 4.3 percent.

The source of the increase in stocks was agriculture production and the rise in inventory of crude and petroleum products.

Several factors can explain the continued sluggishness of private investment.

One, there is still excess capacity in production. The average capacity utilization rate in the manufacturing sector for the first 11 months of 2001 was 77.8 percent compared with 80.3 percent in the corresponding period in 2000.

Two, investor confidence, which has barely recovered from the uncertainty created by domestic political factors was undermined by the adverse external climate and domestic peace and order concerns.

And three, the increasing nonperforming loans (NPL) ratio may have prevented banks from lending to the business sector. However, what is more relevant is the debt-overhang of private sector firms, which has constrained borrowing.

Consumption-led growth

Personal consumption expenditures grew at a marginally slower pace, from 3.5 percent in 2000 to 3.4 percent last year. This renders growth in 2001 to be consumption-led. The steady performance of the agriculture sector, which accounts for about 40 percent of total employment, and the increase in the peso equivalent of overseas workers' remittances can partly explain the resilience of personal consumption. As expected, the deficit in net exports widened in 2001 compared to its level in 2000 due to the decline in external demand.

Exports contracted in nominal dollar terms for the first time since 1985. This led to a lower trade balance, which registered a surplus of $2,742 million in 2001 compared to a surplus of $6,911 million in 2000. Weak investment and lower exports led to a fall in imports.

Key issues

Despite the upbeat mood of the country's economic managers over the GDP performance, the goal of high and sustainable output growth seems to be as elusive as ever. Poor investments in the past four years imply that future growth will be constrained. It also indicates that it will be very difficult to mimic the high growth rates of our Southeast Asian neighbors that took place in the period 1985 and 1997. Hence, it is important that private investments get back on track.

Even with lower interest rates, domestic credit growth to the private sector remained in negative territory in 2001, in both nominal and real terms. The rising NPL ratio has constrained bank lending, but the outcome is more a result of weak investments leading to low demand for credit.

Sluggish demand for credit since the onset of the 1997 crisis, which has been used by policymakers as an argument for monetary tightening from late 2000 up to October 2001, did not have a negative impact on investment. However, once private investment recovers, monetary policy has to be calibrated to support the recovery. Lower interest rates in the industrialized economies should provide more leeway for further easing of monetary policy. The NPL ratio of commercial banks continued to climb steadily, reaching 18.76 percent in November 2001, from only 12.1 percent in January 1999. While the NPL ratio remains at a manageable level, what is worrisome is its rising trend.

Rising NPL ratio

Unlike many of the crisis countries in the Asian region, the Philippines did not set up a government-funded asset management company (AMC) primarily because the financial sector escaped the crisis relatively unscathed. However, due to the rise in the NPL ratio, several banks have publicly endorsed a state-organized AMC. This has been resisted by the government, which has cited fiscal constraints and moral hazard issues as its reasons for maintaining an arms-length approach. Instead, policymakers have encouraged local banks to establish their own-shared AMC.

Another proposal being floated is for foreign investment banks and accounting firms to either set up a private sector AMC or purchase local banks' NPLs outright. Possible legislative measures to support private initiatives are included in the National Socioeconomic Pact of 2001.

The fiscal deficit again exceeded the government target, but fell to 3.8 percent of GNP compared with 3.9 percent last year. While still manageable, there should be concern over the recurrence of the deficit after a surplus in the consolidated public accounts was recorded in 1996. Moreover, the deficit has been accompanied by a structural-—as opposed to cyclical—-downturn in tax effort.

Domestic borrowing has been the favored means of financing the deficit since high international bond spreads have discouraged foreign borrowing, even if international interest rates have fallen until January 2002. In the context of low credit demand by private investors, crowding-out has been minimal and treasury bill rates have even gone down.

However, persistently high fiscal deficits may undermine the recovery of private investment. The most effective way to deal with this problem would be to improve the tax effort—-tax revenue as a percentage of GDP—which, in 2000, has already fallen below the 1990 level.

One measure that the government has considered is the indexing of the specific rates on excise taxes to inflation since indirect taxes have been the main source of the deterioration in tax effort. However, improvements in tax administration, elimination of leaks and loopholes, and stricter enforcement of existing tax laws, could go a long way toward improving the revenue base. Efforts to reduce the onerous conditions of build-operate-and-transfer (BOT) contracts should also be pursued.

Successful transition

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has recently put into practice inflation targeting as its monetary policy framework. Many of the necessary ingredients for a successful transition are in place, particularly the credibility of the BSP as an independent institution. However, there are still concerns about its commitment toward a more flexible exchange rate system. While the exchange rate has experienced more volatility since the 1997 financial crisis, there were occasions when interest rate increases coincided with a sharp depreciation of the peso.

The deterioration in the poverty situation between 1997 and 2000 only serves to underscore the need to improve the antipoverty programs in the Philippines. It should be recognized that three of every four people considered poor live in rural areas and a large majority of them are dependent on agriculture and agriculture—related industries for employment and income.

Moreover, economic growth, and not specific programs, explains a significant percentage of poverty reduction in the past. Thus, in terms of fiscal tools, the government can focus on rural infrastructure and primary education. Meanwhile, the government can improve the policy environment that will encourage private efforts in the provision of micro finance and low-income housing programs. The National Socioeconomic Pact of 2001 also delves on measures related to these.

Prospects for 2002

Rather than put emphasis on numbers, the center of discussion should revolve around scenarios. The macroeconomic factors that are important include the fiscal deficit, behavior of interest rates and exchange rate stability. Structural factors will also influence the direction of the economy. For example, the transition in the energy sector following the passage of the Philippine Electric Power Industry Reform Act will be closely monitored. Inflation targeting has also been implemented beginning this year. Peace and order concerns and governance issues, in general, will also figure prominently in the analysis.

The external environment will continue to impact on the economic performance of the Philippines. Contrary to earlier analysis and expectations, the Philippines was not as hard hit by the recession in the US. Hence, the outcome in 2002 will not be too dependent on the extent of the recovery of the global economy. The more important factors would be the behavior of the yen vis-a-vis other major currencies, the fall in risk aversion of foreign investors and related recovery of capital flows, particularly portfolio investment, and the rebound in the global electronics market.

The most likely scenario would be improved fiscal performance, an accommodating monetary policy and a flexible but stable exchange rate. The Macapagal administration is expected to continue to tackle the deficit problem head on and several measures to boost revenue collections are pending with Congress. The more crucial proposals are included in the National Socioeconomic Pact of 2001. The downtrend in inflation and lower international interest rates will allow the BSP to cut domestic interest rates further. Moreover, the Philippine outlook was upgraded from negative to stable, indicating lower risk premia.

Yen depreciation

The recent depreciation of the yen will have mixed effects on the economy. On the one hand, it will lower the dollar value of yen-denominated debts. On the other hand, it will lead to an appreciation of the real effective exchange rate. The latter, however, will have little impact on our competitiveness since our main competitors (i.e., Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia) will be similarly affected. What should be of more concern is the possible adverse impact of a weaker yen on foreign direct investment from Japan.

Lower international interest rates should lead to a rise in portfolio flows into emerging markets including the Philippines. This will help stabilize the peso, which will feel pressure from a depreciating yen. The fall in international rates has been accompanied by a reduction in the risk premium charged to Philippine debt, which is measured by the sovereign bond spread over US treasuries. The sharp decline since November 2001 is indicative of improved sentiment over the country's prospects.

The momentum generated in the fourth quarter of 2001 will be sufficient to propel the economy to a higher GDP growth rate in 2002. This would be in the vicinity of 4.1 percent. The more favorable external environment, at least in the US, will do away with one obstacle to improved consumer and investor confidence. A more conducive macroeconomic backdrop would also send a positive signal to investors. The combination of these factors would make it very likely that the long awaited recovery in private investment will materialize this year. This would translate into a relatively strong growth in fixed investment, particularly construction.

Agriculture growth

Agriculture, for one, is expected to be affected by the El Niño weather disturbance and should grow by 2 percent. This may derail the recovery of the food manufacturing sector; but the recovery in the export sector and domestic investment should enable manufacturing value added to expand by 4.5 percent. The service sector is usually the prime beneficiary of an upturn in economic growth. Value added in services should grow by at least 4.8 percent.

Inflation will likely decelerate further in the first half of the year. The trend will reverse once the effects of lower agriculture output will kick in. The whole year average will be between 4 and 4.5 percent.

Downside risks, of course, still exist which could readily hamper economic performance. Legislation related to improving government revenue may, for instance, he stalled, thereby impeding the reduction in the fiscal deficit. Private investor sentiment is still vulnerable to negative economic shocks and domestic political uncertainty. The former would include the emergence of complications in the implementation of the privatization of the energy sector. Finally, Japan's economic woes may translate into lower foreign aid, investment, and imports. Nevertheless, even if these events are realized, GDP growth will still likely he higher in 2002.

Economic managers, however, should not be content with these relatively mediocre numbers. Their focus should be redirected to structural problems that have constrained our economic growth for more than two decades.

The issues are not new, and neither are the polity recommendations.

What may have changed are the politicians and the economic managers who conveniently ignore them. *(The author is a senior research fellow of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies. This article came out in PIDS' Development Research News)*

GDP growth for selected countries, 2000 actual and IMF forecasts through 2001 (in percent)

	2000	May01	May02	Oct 01	Oct02	Dec01	Dec02
United States	4.1	1.5	2.5	1.3	2.2	1.0	0.7
Japan	2.2	0.6	1.5	-0.5	0.2	-0.4	-1.0
European Union	3.4	2.4	2.8	1.8	2.2	1.7	1.3
Philippines	**4.0**	**3.3**	**4.5**	**2.5**	**3.5**	**2.9**	**3.2**
Singapore	9.9	5.0	5.8	-0.2	4.0	-2.9	1.2
Thailand	4.4	3.0	4.5	2.0	4.0	1.5	2.0

SOURCE : IMF, WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, VARIUS ISSUES.

DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

IMI ties up with Sharp Pte.

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA-controlled Integrated Microelectronics Inc., a leading electronics manufacturer in the country, has entered into a strategic partnership with Sharp Electronics (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. to implement its plan to diversify into higher value-added original equipment manufacturing (OEM).

In a briefing yesterday, IMI vice chair and CEO Filemon Berba said his company's decision to venture into the OEM business via the tie-up with Sharp was part of measures to hedge against the growing threats posed on the local electronics manufacturing sector by the entry of China into the global market.

Company officials said IMI would enter the partnership with Sharp through a subsidiary, Eazix Inc., a joint venture between IMI and Japanese electronics trading firm SiiX that was formed in 1998 to specialize in web-based hardware design and software development.

"We know that China is very formidable so we need to move into a higher knowledge-based level of electronics manufacturing that is not labor-intensive," Berba said, noting that local labor was no longer competitive especially with the entry of China into the World Trade Organization.

IMI president and COO Arthur Tan said the company would beef up its research and development to strengthen the OEM venture. Tan said the company had allotted $4 million for R&D alone for the next two years, of which $1 million was earmarked for this year.

OEM refers to the business of translating the clients' ideas into concrete systems and software designs that will eventually be branded. It has higher value-added but is less labor-intensive compared to electronics manufacturing services (EMS)—such as circuit board and component assembly—which currently dominate the businesses of most Philippine electronics suppliers like IMI.

With the partnership, Eazix has become a member of Sharp's Dream Team of international manufacturers that offers one-stop shopping solutions and design services. Specifically, Eazix will provide services such as system application development and component level design by adopting Sharp's key components such as liquid crystal displays (LCDs) and flash memories as well as pre-manufacturing and value engineering.

"We can ensure a seamless transition from product conceptualization to process design and high-volume manufacturing," Tan said.

AN unidentified man, in white shirt, tries to stop demonstrators from burning flag near the Washington Monument Sunday, after demonstrating outside the headquarters of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund against policies of finance ministers meeting in Washington. AP

Asian economies should pool forex reserves to stand up to US

TOKYO—Asian economies should pool their huge foreign exchange reserves as a step toward a reshaped international monetary system that would be less of a tool of US interests, Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz said on Monday.

In a speech during a conference on Asian economic integration, Stiglitz said current global monetary arrangements had bred damaging currency volatility that required countries to hold substantial assets in reserve in case of shocks.

Because a substantial proportion of reserve assets is held in US Treasury securities, the United States enjoys access to capital on cheaper terms that allows it to live beyond its means, he said.

At the same time, this arrangement exports deflation because it ties up money that would otherwise be spent or invested more profitably at home, said Stiglitz, a professor at Columbia University in New York and a former World Bank chief economist.

Arguing that developing countries shoulder a disproportionate burden of an inequitable system, Stiglitz said Asia would be a good place to start building an alternative model because its central banks are already sitting on huge stockpiles of reserves.

Thirteen governments have already taken tentative steps under the so-called Chiang Mai Initiative to head off a repeat of Asia's 1997 financial meltdown by agreeing to make some of their reserves available to each other in the event of future currency crises.

"An Asian monetary arrangement, an expansion of what is already going on, could serve as the beginning of this new global regime," Stiglitz said.

Stiglitz, who said it was too bad the US Treasury quashed proposals after the 1997 crisis for an Asian Monetary Fund, said a new arrangement need not imply fixed-exchange rates.

But by pooling wealth and engaging in mutual surveillance of their differing economic regimes, countries would be in a better position to pursue regional integration and to stand up to US dominance of the International Monetary Fund and other agencies.

"This stance of going forward in economic integration will allow Asia to take a unified stance in bargaining with the US," Stiglitz said.

Closer regional ties would also facilitate what Stiglitz saw as an inevitable decline in manufacturing in Japan and East Asia, with an accompanying shift to non-tradable services as a result of China's emergence as the low-cost, high-productivity workshop of the world.

"We have to recognize today that the era of manufacturing may be ending just as the era of agriculture ended a century ago," he said.

The fact that Asia covers the economic and political spectrum, from free-market beacon Singapore to communist Vietnam, has combined with historical antagonism toward Japan, which accounts for more than 60 percent of Asian output, to put a brake on regional cooperation along European lines. *Reuters*

Japan surplus data raise export-led recovery hopes

TOKYO—Japan's trade surplus rose 39.3 percent in March from a year earlier, government data showed on Monday, boosting hopes that a pickup in exports led by soaring car shipments could help lift the economy out of recession.

The rise in the surplus—the biggest increase in more than three years on a customs-cleared basis—was due, in part, to a continued sharp drop in imports, reflecting weak domestic demand.

But economists said growing external demand, thanks to a global economic pickup starting in the United States, remained key to Japan's recovery.

"The year-on-year trade surplus rise was a positive surprise," said Kazuhiko Ogata, a senior economist at HSBC Securities in Tokyo.

"Imports fell sharply while exports, which had dragged down the economy, are improving. This reflects downward pressure from domestic demand on the economy, while external demand is beginning to support the economy."

Exports fell 3.1 percent from the previous year, the 12th straight month of decline, but the pace of the reduction had slowed significantly over the past several months.

Imports dropped 12.7 percent, the eighth consecutive month of decline. Imports of crude oil and oil products plunged 29 percent and 49.3 percent, respectively, while those of electronic parts were down 17.8 percent.

"The huge rise in the March surplus is largely due to the fact that the drop in imports far exceeded that of exports," an MOF official told reporters.

"The drop in imports is explained by sluggish domestic demand, which affected imports of crude oil and other petroleum products. A fall in imports of semiconductors was also behind the decline in overall imports."

Of exports, automobiles rose 25 percent, while telecommunications equipment fell 45 percent and electronic parts, including semiconductors, declined by 10 percent.

Car exports had been firm since manufacturers began zero-interest rate financing campaigns immediately after the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

A bomb scare at the Tokyo Stock Exchange, which forced some 800 people in the building to evacuate, had little impact on the bourse's electronic trading. The security measures were lifted about 30 minutes after the market opened.

For the entire fiscal year 2001-02, which ended on March 31, Japan's trade surplus was down 25.9 percent, the largest drop in five years.

The MOF official told reporters that a sharp slowdown in the information technology sector worldwide had been a main cause of drops in both exports and imports during the year. *Reuters*

Mobile operator Orange plans to increase presence in Asia

SINGAPORE—Mobile phone operator Orange, a unit of France Telecom, is in discussions with potential partners in Asia to expand its presence in the region, a senior executive said in remarks published Monday.

Orange, which has already set foot in Thailand, is eyeing other Southeast Asian countries and China, executive vice president Michael Latimer told the Straits Times newspaper.

"Clearly, China is a huge opportunity. There are also several countries in Southeast Asia that we're interested in . . . we would also be interested in Singapore also," he said.

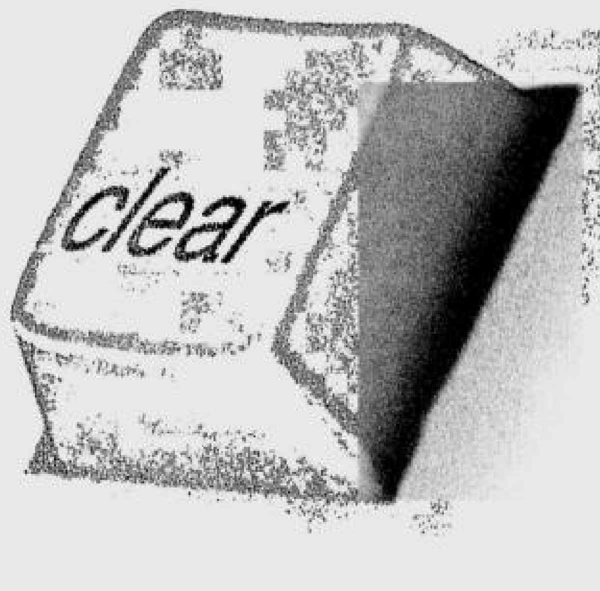
Latimer made no mention of the parties Orange is now in talks with, saying only that his company was "in active discussions with like-minded partners."

Forming partnerships will be the key to Orange"s expansion in this part of the world, he said.

"We don't have the balance sheet to cover the whole world. What we're looking for is to form partnerships with like-minded partners where each side understands what the other side brings," Latimer said.

Apart from Thailand, Orange has also set up a presence in Australia and Hong Kong.

The company launched its service in Thailand last month, investing $600 million, representing Orange's largest investment in Asia. *AFP*



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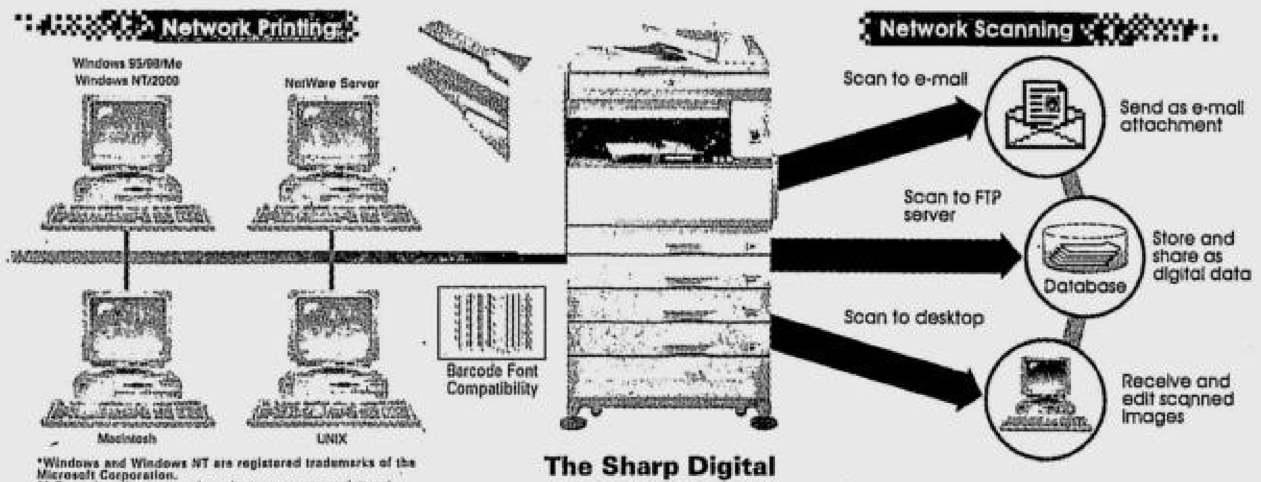

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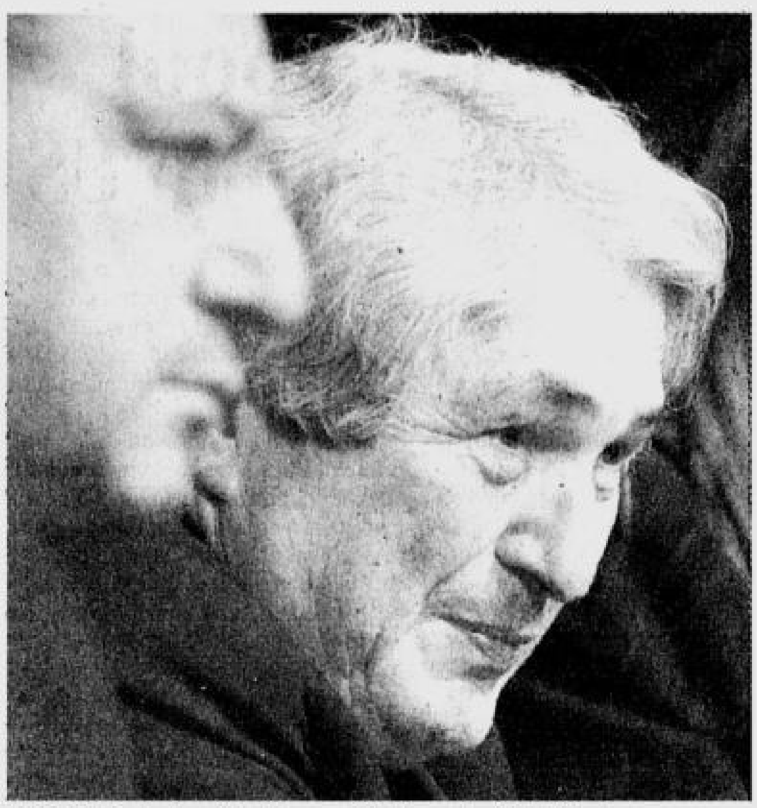

WORLD Bank President James Wolfensohn (right) takes questions from the media with South African Finance Minister Trevor Manuel during the final Development Committee press conference of the IMF/World Bank spring meetings in Washington, D.C., April 21.

G7 silence on Japanese reforms opens door to weakness in yen

NEW YORK—Japan's failure to win strong backing for its economic reforms at a weekend meeting of finance officials from the world's seven largest economies leaves the door ajar for the yen to weaken in the coming months, analysts said on Sunday.

In its communiqué, the Group of Seven finance officials gave no mention of currency levels, and they refrained from outward or oblique criticism of Japan—the world's second largest economy—which had seen economic activity stagnate for 10 years.

But conspicuous was the lack of an endorsement by global policymakers for a proposed Japanese tax cut for June—serving as the central plank of the country's latest attempt to stimulate its economy—and its plans for cleaning up non-performing loans clogging the country's banking system.

Because deep structural reform is seen as the most important step Japan can take to stimulate its moribund economy, the lack of a plan viewed as credible by other G7 members means the Japanese yen, which hit a one-month high below 130 yen last week, may resume a downtrend before long.

"I would expect quite soon for the yen to be above 135," said Lara Rhame, an economist at Brown Brothers Harriman in New York. "But I don't think that will be enough to (grow) the economy. Exports are not a big enough sector."

Economists say a weak yen can assist Japan, as it enhances the competitiveness of the country's exports in overseas markets. But like many analysts, Rhame said that approach is no cure-all in the absence of meaningful reform.

"The world economy is only going to benefit from Japan putting themselves back on line and righting the banking system," she said. "Peer pressure would help."

But Carl Weinberg, chief economist at High Frequency Economics in Valhalla, New York, said nothing positive would come of "harassing Japanese authorities." He added the G7's silence on the topic of exchange rates was reflective of the market's dearth of activity recently.

"There's nothing unstable about the yen, and nothing's happened in currencies since Sept. 11," when the dollar hit multimonth lows against major currencies in the wake of the attacks on New York and Washington, Weinberg said.

"It's been a very quiet last few months in currencies, and the G7 rightly had nothing to talk about," he added.

Japan's finance minister, Masajuro Shiokawa, however, appears ready for some softening in the yen's value. According to a Japanese finance official, Shiokawa told Russia's finance minister that he expected the yen to trade between 130 and 135 yen to the US dollar because there had been no major change in Japanese economic fundamentals.

That will push it to the weaker end of the range of 126.40 and 135.15 that the yen has traded at against the dollar this year. On Friday, it closed at 130.31 yen.

Reuters

Mainland technology firms moving beyond 'Made in China'

HONG KONG/SHANGHAI—China, whose vast and cheap labor force has long made it a manufacturing hub for global tech firms, is moving slowly up the industry value chain.

From semiconductors to cell phones and software, foreign companies are increasingly shifting value-added functions such as research and development and marketing to China, which is eager to graduate beyond its role as the world's factory floor.

"You have to go where the music is played," said Peter Borger, president of Siemens Shanghai Mobile Communications Ltd., the German giant's 60-percent owned China joint venture.

Siemens AG is transferring the Asia headquarters of its mobile business from Hong Kong to Shanghai, where its factory cranks out some 1.1 million to 1.4 million mobile phones a month.

More significantly, Siemens plans to double the size of its research and development staff in China from the current 250, Borger said in an interview at Siemens' Shanghai plant.

"China as an R&D center will play an important role, like India for us," he said, noting that China would produce some 270,000 information technology graduates annually by 2005.

China's advancement beyond the "design it abroad, make it in China, sell it abroad" cycle comes partly from its surging power as a market in its own right.

Already, China is the top buyer of cell phones and next year will surpass Japan for second place in personal computers.

China is also gaining from the diffusion of high-tech know-how, much of it acquired from abroad, through its industries. It boasts a sizeable engineering workforce, including numerous returnees from overseas study, increasingly permeated by foreign business practices.

In the southern city of Shenzhen, for example, US software giant Oracle Corp. is setting up a research and development center focusing exclusively on the market in China, which is trying to shed its status as a software backwater.

The eastern city of Suzhou, meanwhile, has become like a suburb of Taipei, with some 3,000 Taiwanese firms having set up shop, including makers of high-end notebook computers.

Reuters

GM delays signing of deal to take over Korea's Daewoo

SEOUL—US auto giant General Motors Corp. (GM) wants to put off the signing of a contract to take over South Korea's bankrupt Daewoo Motor Co., creditors said Monday.

The signing was to take place on Tuesday, but GM and creditors agreed to put it off by at least a week, Daewoo's key creditor, Korea Development Bank (KDB), said.

"A delay is inevitable as documentation requires more time than we thought," a KDB official told AFP, adding the contract could be signed in early or mid May.

"We cannot say exactly when our work will be completed, although all but some minor issues have already been settled," he said.

He ruled out any changes in the broad framework under which a new automaker will start rolling in South Korea in July.

GM will take over Daewoo's two key plants, one in the southeastern city of Changwon and the other in the southwestern city of Gunsan, which together produce about 530,000 units a year.

It will also acquire Daweoo's 10 overseas operations.

GM will be allowed to put back to creditors hidden debts of up to $297 million that could be found over three years after the acquisition.

Analysts have said GM picked up a bargain to acquire Daewoo Motor, which was declared bankrupt in 2000 with liabilities of $17.5 billion that had risen to about $19 billion at the end of last year.

AFP

Japan Telecom to unveil plans to focus on risky mobile phones

TOKYO—Japan Telecom Co Ltd., the nation's third largest telecoms firm, is expected to unveil plans this week to revamp its struggling fixed-line operations.

The move is seen as a prelude to selling that part of its business so it can focus on mobile phones, reflecting the wishes of its new owner Vodafone Group Plc.

But while some analysts question if it makes sense to dump the fixed line business, especially given the cost of restructuring it before it can be sold, others see advantages.

"If you have a more focused business, then the chances are—if you are selling it—a lot greater than if you are looking at a number of different desperate markets," said Bruce Kirk, a telecoms analyst at Commerzbank Securities.

"This is part one of the Vodafone story, if you like, and that's the restructuring."

Investors will look for signs that Japan Telecom will focus more on its mobile unit, J-Phone Co. Ltd., whose operating profit was 91 percent of the total in April-September last year.

"Anything that moves the company more toward the 'mobile only' future, or the pure mobile play for Japan that Vodafone seems to be going toward, is going to be viewed positive," Commerzbank's Kirk said.

On the other hand, the popularity of broadband for faster Internet access could breathe fresh life into fixed lines, and for Japan Telecom to narrow its options by pinning all its hopes on mobiles is clearly risky at a time when growth in its wireless business is slowing due to a maturing mobile market.

In any case it appears that Vodafone will get its way, following the pattern of its moves into the German and Italian markets, where sales of large chunks of the fixed-line businesses of Mannesmann AG and Infostrada were quickly put on the agenda.

Busy streamlining

A new president sent by Vodafone has been busy overseeing streamlining plans that Japan Telecom needs in the face of growing competition and price wars. A decision on the fixed-line business was expected to be made at a board meeting on Thursday.

The buyer is likely to be another foreign company, opening the sector to more competition and adding to pressure on other Japanese carriers to streamline their fixed-line business.

Japan Telecom expects a group net loss of 71 billion yen ($544.3 million) for the business year that ended on March 31.

Since Vodafone grabbed a majority holding in it last October, raising its stake to 66.7 percent, Chief Executive Chris Gent has made clear he will shake up management to raise profit margins.

Japan Telecom shares have fluctuated amid anticipation of restructuring. It ended Monday morning up 0.72 percent, trailing a 1.11-percent rise by the benchmark Nikkei average

So far, William Morrow, the president sent by Vodafone, has said only that it will concentrate on a "core" business.

It has already announced measures which analysts say reflect Vodafone's cost-saving philosophy, including reshuffling its management to cut the number of board members to 15 from 19.

Reuters

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Hewlett-Packard faces court in Compaq deal

SAN FRANCISCO—The most chaotic period in venerable Hewlett-Packard's 63-year history comes to a head this coming Tuesday, as the Silicon Valley giant joins a legal battle against cofounder heir Walter Hewlett.

Hewlett charges, in Delaware court, that HP chief executive Carly Fiorina used bribery and deception to win enough shareholder votes to approve the $20-billion merger with Houston-based computer maker Compaq.

Fiorina, the chief architect of the merger, contends the deal is essential for HP's future in a dwindling technology landscape dominated by giants like Microsoft and IBM.

Hewlett adamantly argues that the merger will tie HP too tightly to Compaq's computer manufacturing, a market that has seen a steady decline as users buy cheaper machines, if they buy them at all.

"The battle is far from over," said Hewlett spokesperson Todd Glass. "There is a lot that has to be examined before we can declare it over."

"We are confident about this merger," said HP spokesperson Judy Radlinsky. "We are ready to execute as soon as possible."

This coming week also brings another dubious milestone in the history of the high-tech company.

Friday, the company's board will formally vote to remove Hewlett from the board, a move company official took after he sued HP.

When that vote is ratified, it will mark the first time that the company founded by his father, Bill Hewlett, and Dave Packard, have no heirs on the board.

In the lawsuit, which could delay and even end the merger, Hewlett claims Fiorina coerced Deutsche Bank, a major company shareholder, to change its millions of votes to favor the merger.

Part of that enticement, Hewlett alleges, was the recent establishment of a multimillion-dollar credit that benefited Deutsche Bank.

,Hewlett also has also accused HP executives of duping shareholders about the benefits of the merger.

HP officials, including Fiorina, gave depositions over the weekend for the upcoming trial, which is scheduled to last three days.

Two weeks ago, in stolen voice mail to HP Chief Financial Officer Bob Wayman, Fiorina vowed to do "something extraordinary" for Deutsche Bank and Northern Trust, another large shareholder, to win merger votes.

That voice mail was leaked to the media. The company has launched an internal investigation to find the leaker. **AFP**

Top government think tank sees China's 2002 GDP growth at 7.4%

BEIJING—A top government think tank has forecast China's gross domestic product will grow an annual 7.4 percent in 2002, powered by domestic demand, the China Economic Times reported on Monday.

"GDP growth is expected to reach around 7.4 percent in 2002, largely retaining the growth momentum from 2001 and probably slightly better than last year," the newspaper quoted a report by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) as saying.

The economy, Asia's bright spot, grew a better-than-expected 7.6 percent year on year in the first quarter, bouncing back from its worst quarterly growth in two years and beating market expectations of about 7.3 percent.

Analysts said the first-quarter rebound was helped by heavy state investment, rising spending on housing and cars and resurgent exports.

The economy grew an annual 7.3 percent last year.

A Reuters poll of regional economists in March forecast China's economy would grow 7.1 percent this year, slightly higher than the government's 7 percent growth target.

CASS forecast China's fixed asset investment would rise an annual 12.3 percent this year, while retail sales—a gauge of domestic consumption—would rise 10.5 percent this year, the newspaper said.

The government is relying on massive fiscal stimulus for a fifth year by issuing 150 billion yuan ($18 billion) in special bonds this year to help spur infrastructure investment.

CASS urged the government to introduce "structural" tax cuts and spur money supply growth to help relieve a growing debt burden on the government, the newspaper said.

"The fiscal burden has risen significantly and risks in fiscal spending are rising steadily," the report said. Analysts have said China's fiscal deficit was approaching a danger line of 3 percent of GDP.

Finance Minister Xiang Huaicheng has pledged to gradually phase out deficit-spending—started in 1998 amid the Asian economic crisis—due to concerns over debt repayment risks. *Reuters*

AMID FINANCIAL CRISIS

Argentina moves to reorganize banking system

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Argentina's government announced it was sending legislation to Congress aimed at reorganizing the government-run banks, a move seen as an attempt to rescue the country's tottering financial system.

At a news conference Sunday, a spokesperson for President Eduardo Duhalde said the government would send a bill to legislators next week to create the Banco Federal Nacional. The bank would be a merger of Argentina's largest bank, Banco de La Nacion, and the investment bank, Banco de Inversion y Comercio Extranjero.

The government all provincial and municipal banks were invited to join the merger, including the government-run banks of Buenos Aires province and the city of Buenos Aires, two of Argentina's largest.

Spokesperson Eduardo Amadeo said the move would help strengthen the banking system.

"We need an efficient public banking system," he said. "The intention is to have stronger, more solid banks, so that they can make loans."

The measure is aimed at shoring up Argentina's creaky banking system, which is suffering under the weight of a four-year recession and the exodus of deposits from the financial system over the past 12 months.

In recent days it has become increasingly clear that Argentina's financial system is in deep trouble.

On Saturday, Duhalde admitted the country's financial system "ran the risk of collapsing."

His comments came just two days after the Central Bank suspended the activities of Scotiabank Quilmes for 30 days, the country's 11th largest bank, because of its low level of operating capital and reserves.

Private analysts say many of Argentina's banks face similar problems, in particular the smaller provincial banks, many of which have been privatized over the past decade.

Meanwhile on Friday, the Central Bank ordered an indefinite halt on all foreign exchange and banking transactions until the government had drawn up an economic plan to stem the outflow of around $100 million a day from the banks.

In the news conference, Amadeo confirmed the basics of that plan, which will be sent to Congress on Monday. **AP**

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Steel dispute overshadows US commerce chief's visit

BEIJING—US Commerce Secretary Don Evans inspected clean energy vehicles Monday during a visit overshadowed by Chinese anger over American tariffs on steel products.

Accompanied by 15 US business leaders, Evans was due to meet President Jiang Zemin, his trade minister, Shi Guangsheng, and other Chinese officials later Monday and Tuesday.

The mission is seeking new business opportunities in the wake of China's accession in December to the World Trade Organization. China promised to pry open its markets to join the global trade group.

Evans came to China from Japan, where he defended the tem_porary tariffs on steel imports. Imposed to protect the ailing US steel industry, they have been heavily criticized by US trade partners.

A Chinese trade official said last week the tariffs would cause $1.2 billion in losses for Chinese firms, state media reported. China has vowed to use its new rights as a WTO member to fight the tariffs.

Evans did not mention the steel issue in brief remarks Monday morning after inspecting vehicles using US-developed clean energy technology. They included a General Motors Buick van powered by a hydrogen fuel cell and buses fueled by compressed natural gas.

"That's what the world needs is this kind of technology," Evans said. **AP**

Delta rides technology wave

BANGKOK—The outlook for Thailand's biggest tech firm, Delta Electronics Plc., is set to stay bright as it rides a technology revival this year and takes new orders from video games makers Microsoft and Sony.

Delta, a unit of the world's third-largest switching power supply (SPS) maker of the same name in Taiwan, saw sales dip in March because sales of flat screen monitors were lower than expected at Japan's Sony Corp.

But analysts say demand for SPS technology—which makes up some 60 percent of Thai Delta's earnings—will boost the company's sales for the rest of this year.

SPS technology, which adjusts power levels in electronic equipment, is used in computers, fax machines, adapters, mobile phone chargers and video games.

Delta's other major clients include Hewlett-Packard, Dell and Gateway. Its stock, ranked among Asia's top 20 performers over the past year, has risen more than 100 percent over the past 12 months, and further upside is expected.

"With the anticipated recovery of the IT industry this year, we believe the largest SPS maker in Thailand will continue to win new orders," said Lim Tee Wee at ING Barings in Singapore.

Delta diversified from the PC sector to consumer electronics in 2001, with an increasing revenue contribution from SPS products that have a gross margin of 20-25 percent compared with 4-8 percent for monitors.

Despite a decline in Thai exports last year, Delta, which is valued at $1.02 billion on the Thai stock market, posted a healthy net profit of 3.87 billion baht ($88 million) in 2001. Its gross margins rose to 20 percent in 2001 from 15 in 2000.

Delta has a target of 30 percent sales growth in 2002.

The collapse in February of a ceiling at one of its plants, which killed seven workers and caused a 10-day shutdown, was seen having little impact on the firm's profitability, company officials said.

"So far the outlook for SPS is promising. The target should be achievable," Anusorn Muttaraid, Delta's executive director, told Reuters.

Delta posted sales of $66 million in March, down 1 percent year-on-year, due mainly to weaker-than-expected sales of flat screen monitors, which it assembles for Sony.

But analysts remain optimistic, saying new orders for high-margin SPS products could help offset the impact from poor performance in the monitor sector.

Delta is likely to get new SPS orders for Microsoft's Xbox and Sony's Playstation 2 games machines around the end of the second quarter, they say.

"Hot-selling game consoles will be the main driver for its earnings," said Komsun Suksumrun, analyst at Merrill Lynch.

According to Multex Global Estimates, seven of 14 analysts recommend a "buy" on Delta, with a 2002 net profit consensus estimate of 4.2 billion baht, up 9 percent year-on-year.

Even though Delta's price-to-book at 3.2 times makes it the most expensive among its domestic peers, analysts said the country's biggest tech firm in terms of market capitalization should trade at a premium.

Reuters

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COMML/RESDL

MANILA

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PARANAQUE

400m² multintl T5237829

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Very nice Bung w/ Grden 300m² 3BR 2TB Baywindow 2 CG, H²0 24 Hr. Sec. 8239255

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OTHER AREAS

•LAGUNA BEL-AIR 3•
LA120m² up 2-3BR w/prkg
Joann 912-5775

LOT

MANILA

COMMERCIAL beside TUTUBAN COMM'L CENTER/#1414 A. Rivera St. 345 sq.m. vacant Ph: 712-3303/741-5381

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LOT

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APARTMENT

MAKATI

3BR 2TB w/grge 8992148

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CONDO/TWNHSE/ APT

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Alabang Zapote Rd.,
Las Piñas City
Initial DP: P 25,000

COASTAL WOODS VILLAGE
Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite
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APARTMENT

QUEZON CITY

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•P5.5T Studio T-9267419

HOUSE

ALABANG

18T 0918-9242622/8265861

PARANAQUE

MGV Pque 2sty 5BR4TB w/ phone CP09195546815 Didi

QUEZON CITY

3BR 2TB H2Osys grge sec Metro Hghts Subd Proj 6 9312089 / 09202338682

OTHER AREAS

2BR 2TB bung FF 9125847

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

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Shall have at least ten (10) yrs. exp. as a Maint. Engr. or Maint. Supvr., prof. in a position where maint. of Fire Detection & Suppression sys. constituted part of the job. Must be familiar w/ NFPA Test & Repair/Maint. Standards & on the diff. types of fire detection & protection sys. & fire protection eqpt.

FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEERS

Shall have at least six (6) yrs. exp. as a Sr. Engr. in Fire Protection Engg. Must be familiar w/ NFPA Standards & on the diff. types of fire detection & protection sys. & fire protection eqpt.

MAINTENANCE PLANNERS

Shall be familiar with fire detection & protection sys. & fire protection eqpt. & have at least five (5) yrs. exp. on data base development & optn. Specific exp. in programming & operating MS Access data base program & in using Micro Station/AutoCAD is mandatory for this position. Specific exp. in Maintenance or Project Planning & in using MS Word & MS Excel is an advantage.

SENIOR FIRE PROTECTION TECHNICIANS

Shall have at least eight (8) yrs. exp. in the optn. & maint. of diff. types & brands of fire detection & protection sys. incl. water based, gaseous, and/or dry chemical sys.

FIRE SYSTEMS MECHANICAL TECHNICIANS

Shall have at least five (5) yrs. exp. in the optn. & mechl. maint. of diff. types & brands of fire protection eqpt. incl. water based, gaseous, and/or dry chemical sys. Specific exp. on the test & inspection & maint. of fire pump, controller and/or its driver (electric motor & diesel engine) & accessories is required.

FIRE SYSTEMS INSTRUMENTATION TECHS.

Shall have at least five (5) yrs. exp. in the optn. & maint. of diff. types & brands of fire detection & protection sys. Specific exp. on the test & inspection & maint. of fire pump, controller and/or driver & accessories is required.

Preferably with at least three (3) yrs.exp. from an Electric Utility company or equivalent establishment for all above positions.

Apply and bring two sets of resumes, certificates of employment, certificates of training and seminars, school records and 2x2 pictures to:

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We are looking for competent suppliers of B.I. ANNEALED WIRE 3.2 mm diameter
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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

DARLING TRAVEL & TOURS Hongkong / China $350 April 30 / May 7, 14, 21, 28. Call 9100055 • 0917-2414841

AUCTION SALE

Victory Pawnshop at 45 Bonifacio Market EDSA will hold an auction sale of all expired items on May 7, 2002 at 10:00 AM Mr. Jun Zamora - Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Misamis Oriental
Cagayan de Oro City

In the Matter of the Change of Name
in the Certificate of Live Birth
of Jaime Palomares Cantones

Petition Entry No. ______

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

The public is hereby notified that Jaime Palomares Cantones has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from "Anastacio" to "Jaime" in the Certificate of Live Birth of Jaime Palomares Cantones.

At the expense of the petitioner, let a copy of this petition be published at least once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of national circulation. Any person having knowledge and/or claiming interest or may be adversely affected by said petition may, within fifteen (15) calendar days, file his written opposition with this office.

(Sgd.) LEO G. WABE
City Civil Registrar

(PDI – Apr. 16 & 23, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that the passport of Mr. Rogelio Abaquita Moreno was lost. Anybody who has found his passport kindly contact Mr. Ronald Moreno T-8513081
(PDI-April 22, 2002)

ERRATUM

In the Job Market advertisement of **MOF COMPANY (SUBIC), INC.** published on April 21, 2002 the address should have been **MOF COMPANY (SUBIC), INC. 6th Floor, 2232 CTC Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City** not CDC Building as published.

Likewise in the list of the participants in the JOBZ, the INQUIRER Job Market's Employment Expo 2002, **MOF COMPANY** should have been **MOF COMPANY (SUBIC), INC.**

OUR APOLOGIES

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Our Mother Had a Heart Full of Song

As far back as I can remember, our mother always sang. Not that she was a great singer. But it didn't matter. She sang while cooking, while washing, while cleaning the house. She sang through her hardships, rearing five children without any help, making both ends meet with our father's meager salary. I could always sense her approach by the sweet hummed tunes that preceded her.

On her hospital bed, we surrounded her with music. We, her children, sang to her - songs of our childhood, songs of praise, old standards we all knew. And she would still listen and enjoy it, tapping the fingers of her good hand to keep our time.

Now she sings before the throne of God.

A Loving Tribute
to our Beloved Mother

FELIZA G. ANG

(February 21, 1913 - April 20, 2002)

Widow of Tomas

Cherry **Amar**	**Vicki** **Peter**	**Eugenio (†)** **Didi**	**Joseph** **Tessie**	**Sr. Mercy, rgs**
Jeng & **Raoul** **Jmar**	**Noel &** **Rachana** **Joy**	**Chinky** **Euge**	**Vinnie** **Tessa**	

Katya

She lies in state at Capilla de San Francisco, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Wednesday, April 24, 2002 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque following 9:00 a.m. Mass.

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of

Suyen Corporation

condole with the family of

Ma. Victoria "Chic" Migallos Marasigan

Assistant Vice-President

Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on April 20, 2002 at the age of 43.

Chic's bereaved husband **Adrian (Kid)**; and children **Catrina (Cat)** and **Alphonso Apolonio (King)**; parents **Santos** and **Coleta**; parents-in-law **Apolonio** and **Araceli** (†); sisters, brothers and in-laws **Ivy** and **Pacifico Torres**, **Mark** and **Ma. Luisa**, **Barbara**, **Biboy** and **Grace**, **Miguel**, **Ariel** and **Mady**, **Baby** and **Indian Flor**, **Sonny** (†), **Girlie** and **Tony Chua**, **Joy** and **Sylvia**, **Jewel** (†), **Cupid** and **Jonat Banzuela**, **Jigger** and **Arlene**, **Aimee**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish Memorial Chapels, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Masses are scheduled at 8:00 p.m. on April 22 and 23, 2002. Interment will be held on Wednesday, April 24, 2002 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City following the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish Church.

"You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence of living with you forever."
Psalm 16:11 (NLB)

Our Beloved Mama

GO WUN CHING y ONG

Peacefully joined our Lord
and her husband the late ***Ong Bi Cheong***
on April 20, 2002 at the age of 90.

Her bereaved children **Tiek Beng** (†) and **Emilia Dy**, **Tiek Guan** and **Sally Kang**, **Allen** and **Corazon Chua**, **Cecilia** and **Michael Velasco**, **Cotaminda** and **Nelson Chua**, **Leanne** and **Peter Li**, **Rev. Tony** (**Tiek Chiao**) and **Normita Sy**, **Hannah** and **Greg Haskell**; grandchildren **Eugene**, **Jenny & Mark**, **Edmund & Ana Mary**, **Eric & Desiree**, **Emmanuel & Gladice**, **Evian**, **Allan**, **Alvin**, **Albert**, **Clement & Rowena**, **Candice**, **Clifton**, **Chester**, **Cleaver**, **Oliver**, **Tricia**, **Joel**, **Lynnette**, **Laura**, **Timothy**, **Kristobelle**, **Abigail**, **Andrew**, **Nathan**, **Stacey**; and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be held on Friday, April 26, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, after service at 9:00 a.m.

ARTURO F. FORMILLEZA

August 28, 1942 - April 19, 2002

Has gone to his Father
in heaven and joined his parents
Modesto Sr. and **Amparo**
and his brother **Andres**
in the next life.

His brothers and sisters
Thelma and **Herminio Gutierrez**,
Edna, **Leticia**, **Junior** and **Auring**, **Rt.**
Rev. Father Andy, OSB,
nephews and nieces request
your prayers for the eternal
repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at
Mt. Carmel Church, Broadway, Quezon City.
Fr. Andy, OSB will celebrate a
Requiem Mass every evening
at 10:00 (Saturday and Sunday)
at 8:00 (Monday to Wednesday).
The Funeral Mass will be celebrated
at Mt. Carmel Church
at 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 25, 2002,
after which the body will be
taken for cremation.

Our Dearly Beloved

Leonor Estabaya Vda. De Monforte

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on the 22nd day of April 2002 at the age of 85.

Her loving husband **Luis** (†); children **Fe Buenaflor**, **Sally**, **Alex** & **Letty**, **Adolf** & **Bing**, **Ralph** (†) & **Cora Zulueta**, **Panchie**, **Jun** & **Chary Mazo**; sisters **Lourdes** & **Lucila**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request you to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sacred Heart Parish Church, Dao Street (in front of YMCA), San Antonio Village, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

CONRADO A. ALBERTO

Retiree of Medichem/
United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on April 20, 2002 at the age of 63.

His body lies in state at
Eliseum Funeral Parlor,
Juan Luna Street, Tondo, Manila.

Interment will be on April 24 at
Himlayan Pilipino, Tandang Sora,
Quezon City.

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard,
nor has it so much as dawned on
man what God has prepared for those
who love Him.
I Corinthians 2:9

ESTELITA CUYA MATEO

September 3, 1928 - April 21, 2002

Her children **Jacinto III** and **Grace Estela**; daughter-in-law **Evangeline**; grandchildren **Jason Robert** and **Geleen Grace**; brother **Alfredo**; and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City and will be transferred to her residence in GSIS St., Gulinang Bayan I, San Mateo, Rizal on April 25, 2002.

Interment will be at Paraiso Memorial Park, San Mateo, Rizal on April 28, 2002. For further details, please contact telephone number (02) 941-6613.

FELIPE SINGSON QUE

of Vigan, Ilocos Sur

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 18, 2002 at the age of 64.

His children **Dorothy**, **Philip** & **Analyn**, **Peter**; and grandchildren **Justin**, **Engelbert**, and **Jezrel** and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Lawrence Baquiran, Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur.

Interment will be on Thursday, April 25, 2002 at the Vigan Memorial Park after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

REALESTATE

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

HOME DESIGN WITH FORESIGHT

'Multistory addition' for low-income Filipinos

By Tessa R. Salazar

MOST housing structures have been designed for the need of the moment, especially low-cost houses. People do not foresee their need for expanding the house, despite their plans of raising a family.

Is there a chance, then, that a low-cost house could anticipate the future? Can low-income Filipinos build a dwelling place that could be "added on to" as the need arises and as finances become available?

Willing to share

For an 81-year-old civil engineer whose experiences have included heading the construction of industrial buildings here and abroad, the answer is a definite "yes." Wilfrido Posadas—whose patented works include the horizontal interlocking hollow blocks—is willing to share his blueprint for low-cost housing at no cost to the government. The blueprint includes his three-pronged approach of building a safe, spacious and affordable house that allows for "multistory addition" as well as the construction cost study.

The approach involves a growth-oriented housing design, the proper choice of materials, and utilizing self-labor, where the occupants build the structure themselves.

House built for 2, then 4...

The "multistory addition" house is built initially just for two—for just-married couples. The house starts small so the building cost would be small. On a 25-sq.-m lot, for instance, a 21-sq.-m one-level house can be built. This house would be strong enough to expand to 45 sq. m a few years later by adding a second floor. By this time, the young couple would have had one or two children. More members to the family would require another floor, making the house area cover 69 sq. m in all. Posadas claims the government allows this setup.

Years later, as the grown-up children leave the house to start their own families, the couple would be left with a three-floor house. Would this, then, be too big for the old couple? Not so, Posadas points out. The two floors above could now be rented out. Besides, getting old would make climbing the stairs difficult.

Posadas' rendition of a practical low-cost Filipino home is a response to the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Mike Defensor's own description of a typical Filipino home: simple specs for a simple dream. It would not be a mothballed Boracay mansion but definitely not a fragile and rickety matchbox.

A simple house, describes Posadas, would have rooms that would serve multiple functions. There would just be enough space for a living room, a dining room, a kitchen and a bedroom, with a separate toilet and bathroom. Posadas also stresses that costly building elements such as gutters, downspout fences and eaves should just be optional.

"At the beginning, occupants may have to sacrifice comfort and convenience. Nevertheless, with a house designed to grow, it is possible to gain additional space when they can afford it," he says.

A concrete roof deck is also recommended, rather than a CGI roof. A concrete roof makes the house ready for vertical expansion. It becomes the floor for the second level. A concrete roof deck also makes the construction of the second level much cheaper than the ground floor construction. And while the family works for the budget to construct the second floor, the occupants can use the sturdy deck as open space for whatever use. Expansion can be done in stages for gradual financial expenditure, Posadas adds.

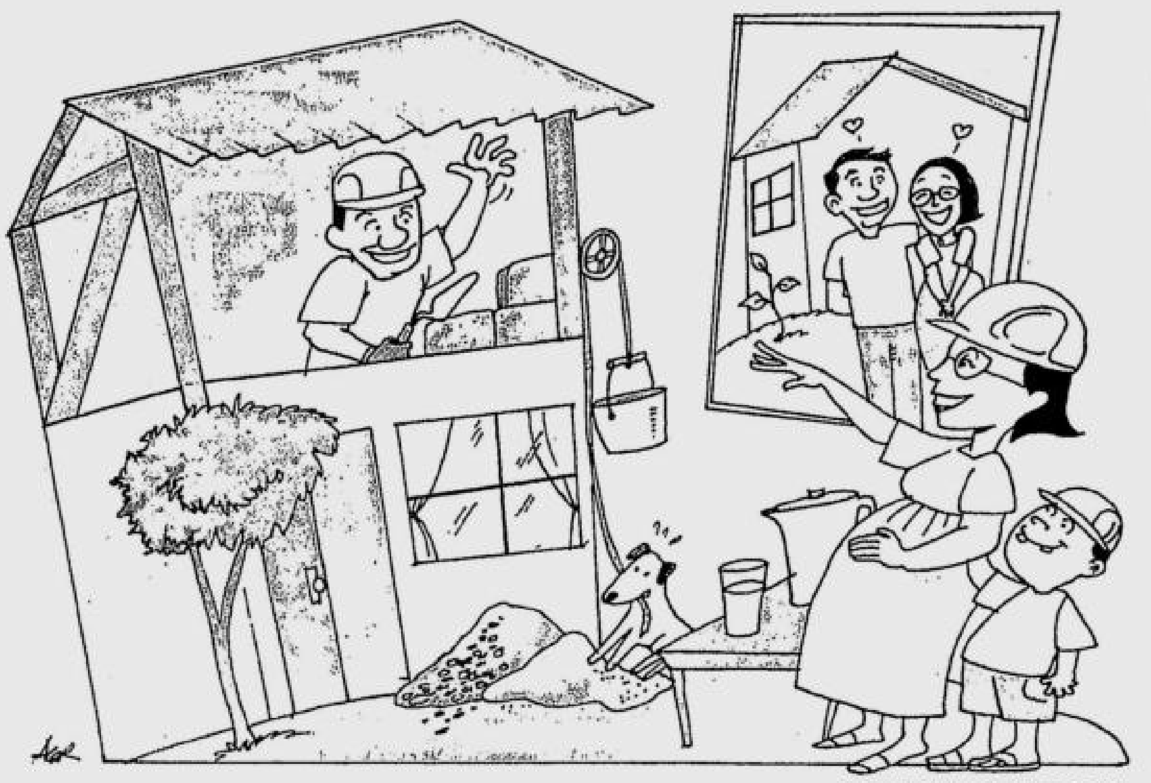

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Posadas, a civil engineer since 1945, showed to the INQUIRER his detailed floor plans of the various types of expanded houses that also included a horizontal expansion.

The vertically expandable house, for instance, depicts several designs. There is a one-story dwelling with a concrete roof deck designed for multistory addition. There's also a one-story house with a high roof with provision for a loft or mezzanine, and a one-story house with provision for raising the roof and placing an additional floor.

He stresses that "he doesn't want his ideas to die with him," and that these ideas "could be taken advantage of by as many homeless Filipinos as possible."

Cost-effective materials

When designing, the engineers and architects must consider what the best and most cost-effective materials are for a particular building, stresses Posadas. Material cost varies from place to place. Posadas says it is a must for low-cost housing project proponents to study closely the best material to use in each locality.

He enumerates some materials to be studied. For cement materials: Portland cement, pozzolana, lime-fly ash, waste lime sludge, and sulfur. For concrete products: hollow blocks, precast concrete, and cast-in-place concrete. He also mentions various lumber and earthen products, agricultural products such as bamboo for posts, floors, walls, roof frames as well as substitutes for concrete reinforcement, metal lath and more.

"The architects and engineers know what cost-effective materials mean but, unfortunately, have forgotten to look back on locally sourced materials and have decided to zero in only on what are now being commonly used," he says.

Posadas cites a province replete with bamboo supply but lacked the commonly used reinforcing bars. Homes were then built with bamboos as reinforcing bars. Posadas also cites the hydrated lime which was commonly used before but disappeared because this was replaced with cement, particularly Portland cement. Hydrated lime comes in powder form, and it comes from ground seashells.

"Portland cement is good but you do not need all that for all construction areas. For example, you have to use the cement for the main structure, but you don't need them for plastering walls," he says.

Posadas says Filipinos have forgotten that it is also possible to use lime. Nowadays, however, he says it would be difficult to look for lime, since nobody seems to use it anymore. Old churches, he says, were built with hydrated lime.

Homeowners as laborers

The concept of homeowners as builders has been realized successfully in Habitat for Humanity projects. Using the occupants as the builders of their own houses has long been recommended to reduce the actual cost of construction.

Posadas cites that labor amounts to 30 percent of the direct construction cost. If family members joined in the labor, a big reduction in cost would be realized. Posadas adds that with some training and guidance from the skilled workers, beneficiaries could learn to self-fabricate and self-erect major parts of the structure.

Simple labor skills that homeowners could learn in no time include steel works such as cutting bars to length, bending and installing them. Another easy skill is concreting—measuring ingredients, mixing, pouring, demolding and erection for precast elements.

Aside from cost-savings with self-construction, other benefits include reducing the amount the beneficiary has to pay for the amortization of the house. Homeowners could also learn some useful skills along the way, and reduce the chance of poor workmanship on the house during construction and when adding improvements later. It is, looking at it any which way, their own houses they're building.

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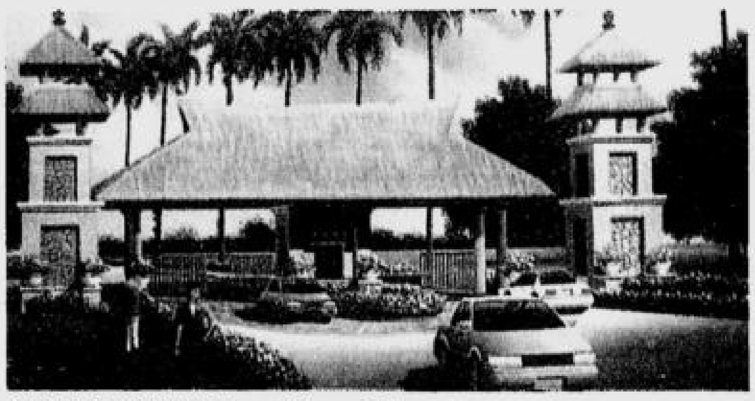
Modern residential farm estate launched

THE SUNDAY morning crowd of brokers, agents and buyers who attended the official launch of Filinvest Nusa Dua modern residential farm estate in Tanza, Cavite, witnessed the vision of a new alternative lifestyle unfolded.

Tanza Mayor Raymundo del Rosario, who graced the momentous occasion, expressed confidence on the impact this modern development would have in the community.

Instead of the traditional groundbreaking, a ceremonial planting was done by the mayor, Filinvest business unit head for Farm Estate Division Andrew Gotianun Jr., agriculture and farming specialist Zac Sarian, assistant business head Raymond Padilla and Filinvest Land special projects head Winnifred Lim.



THE ARCHITECT'S rendition of the entrance gate

The centerpiece of the launch was a Balinese showcase that featured a scale model of the Nusa Dua typical farmlot with a Balinese-designed retreat house.

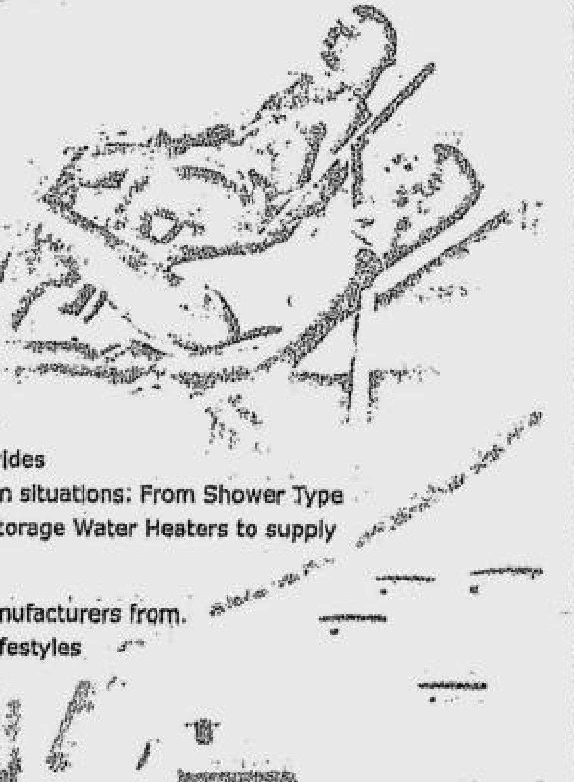
The landscaped showcase comprised images of Nusa Dua (Bali's high-end resort area), the inspiration behind the 200-hectare modern residential farm estate

Gotianun, a self-confessed weekend farmer, shared his personal views on the benefits of having a sanctuary close to nature, away from the stress of corporate life.

Said Gilbert Ang, Nusa Dua's business development manager: "Our estate services will be a one-stop center for our clients. Lot buyers will be able to get professional advice on all the vital requirements of setting up, maintaining and propagating their land. We will hold seminars on crop protection, yield and selection of prolific plants and trees. We will even market their produce after harvest."

Farmlots are available from 740 to 2,000 sq. m. If a buyer so desires, he can also engage in aquaculture using large fish tanks for *tilapia* and other fresh water fish.

When completed, Filinvest will incorporate recreational facilities for family members such as swimming pools, a clubhouse and a park.



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ROBINSONS PLACE RESIDENCES

Tower 1 units sold out

TOWER I of Robinsons Place Residences is already sold out, with units already turned over to their respective owners, while 60 percent of Tower II has already been bought by very excited residents-to-be. The developer, Robinsons Land Corp., attributes the success of this project to the strategic location of Robinsons Place Residences' twin towers in the hub of Manila's commercial, business and tourist districts putting one at a distinct advantage over others because of its premier and central positioning.

RESIDENTS of Robinsons Place Residence will be able to enjoy carefully planned layouts that allow maximum privacy and convenience.

Epitome

Rising 38 stories near the Manila Bay coastline, Robinsons Place Residences is the epitome of modern condominium-living convenience.

Directly interconnected to the sprawling 160,000-square-meter Robinsons Place Manila Mall, it offers residents the unparalleled comfort and ease of remaining under one roof even as they enjoy the countless retail, dining and recreational options offered by the mall.

The mall also houses several service outlets that include banking, courier and laundry services that make day-to-day living more manageable.

Then, there's the adjoining 576-room Manila Midtown Hotel, which presents to residents a superb venue for entertaining guests or for holding important business meetings. And for more auspicious celebrations, there are the hotel's function rooms as well as the 2,000-person capacity Grand Ballroom.

The site and architecture of Robinsons Place Residences itself offer residents a stunning vista of the world-famous Manila Bay and its renowned sunset.

Robinsons Place Residences also has a wide array of recreational amenities for the exclusive use of all the members of the family: a children's playground, a swimming pool and a gym, a card room, a putting green and a bar. There's also a function room for your more formal gatherings.

Choices

Robinsons Place Residences offers a choice among studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom units, each strategically laid out to maximize privacy and convenience.

Highly esthetic and quality ceramic tiles are used for the living, dining and kitchen areas, and toilets and bath. All interiors are roomy, allowing one to furnish each room according to one's taste and preference.

Asian policymakers here for housing forum

By Charles E. Buban

ASIAN legislators and parliamentarians will convene in Manila this week for the 1st Asian Regional Forum of Global Parliamentarians on Habitat to discuss what legislative course action to take in order to provide effective laws on shelter for Asians.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, Asian Regional Council president, together with Sen. Francis Pangilinan, chair of the Senate committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement, and Rep. Prospero Nograles, chair of the House committee on housing and urban development, announced the holding of the forum at the Century Park Hotel Manila on April 24-26.

Invited guests include President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who will keynote the opening ceremony and Mexican Sen. Ernesto Gil Elorduy, president of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat. Elorduy will be joined by other officers of the African and European Regional Council.

The parliamentarians of the different Asian nations are expected to engage in exhaustive deliberation and exchange of ideas on diverse issues, challenges and country experiences in housing and human settlements.

Habitat Agenda

The meeting will highlight the progress of the work done by Asian member-nations in support of the Habitat Agenda and emphasize the integral role of responsible legislation in the development of sustainable cities in the new century.

The Habitat Agenda refers to the adoption of goals and principles of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world as resolved during the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul, Turkey in June 1996.

Biazon said the forum will highlight the progress of the work done by member-nations in support of the Habitat Agenda and will emphasize the integral role of responsible legislation in the development of sustainable cities.

The forum will also discuss how strengthening of legislation in decentralization and participatory urban governance and financing shelter may forge cooperation among governments, civil society, and private and international organizations.

Part of a bigger group

The 1st Asian Regional Council Forum of Global Parliamentarians on Habitat came into being as 194 policymakers from 43 countries gathered in Manila for the 3rd Global Forum of Parliamentarians on Habitat.

During this forum, nine countries from Asia met twice and came out with a Statement of Concerns covering the need to address economic problems, urban unemployment, rural to city migration, the globalization of the economy, the needs of international refugees, environmental problems especially pollution, issues on competing uses of land, issues concerning women especially widows and single mothers, transport development and the need to recognize different approaches by different countries.

The Global Parliamentarians on Habitat were incorporated at the meeting held in Yokohama, Japan, in 1997 and its by-laws were formally adopted at the Global Parliamentarians Meeting on Human Settlements and Development, held in Vancouver, Canada, from March 15 to 20, 1992.

According to its by-laws the objectives of the group are:

- Support the issues on human settlements during its discussions at the Parliaments and in other national and international forums.
- Take a leadership position to ensure and promote the political commitment of the governments and the financial support to improve the living conditions of the people, the human settlements and the sustainable development.
- Promote the collaboration among the national groups of parliamentarians on Habitat through the exchange of information and experiences.
- Initiate and promote legislative measures designing and implementing national policies within the national development plans in the respective countries.
- Encourage the complete and equal participation of women, in the process of human settlements development, thus eliminating legal, cultural and social discriminatory barriers.
- Promote a continuous dialogue among the parliamentarians and among the leaders of socioeconomic planning, within the context of the global strategy on housing toward the year 2000.

Sta. Lucia opens Club Morocco beach resort

STA. Lucia Realty & Development Inc. recently opened the newly completed beach resort of the Club Morocco Beach & Residential Estates in Cabitaugan, Subic, Zambales, with a whole-day sports summer affair for its exclusive members and guests.

The Moorish-themed architecture and interiors of the hotel clubhouse set the idyllic lifestyle along the Subic Cove. The beach club, which has 20 guests' rooms, 3 VIP rooms and five duplex family villas, is the focal point of the 240-hectare beach estate. The residential area, which comprises three villages—Villa Monaco, Villa Ibiza and Villa Venezia—has lot sizes ranging from 200 to 350 sq. m.

Royale Homes Marketing Corp., the marketing network for this development, has packaged the purchase of lots with exclusive beach club membership. Lot prices are from P2,700 to P3,300 per square meter, and affordable payment schemes are also available. This offer is good until April 30.

THE CLUBHOUSE: 'Happening place'

Moorish appeal

Veering away from the usual Californian and Spanish architecture, the clubhouse remains "everything Mediterranean" and perfectly complements the estates and villas in the sprawling property. The fusion of Arabic and Spanish architecture creates the distinct Moorish look and appeal.

-Moorish architecture brings lightness and comfort to airy surroundings. The geometric latticework provides an attractive panel to the balconies that shield the glare of the sun. Porticos, wide terraces, colored cathedral glass panels and windows, geometric spheres and wood parquet floorings enhance its features.

'Happening place'

Sta. Lucia, together with its commissioned architectural firm MLA Planning, worked with the existing landscape of the 2.5-hectare land allotted to the clubhouse. No trees were cut to create additional land space. In the end, a scenic landscape was created in the clubhouse itself, which architect Jun Lim calls "happening place."

In building the clubhouse, MLA adhered to the rules that would not harm the environment. The clubhouse is fully equipped. It is a self-sufficient rest and recreation place, with its own power generator and water tank. The towers with its resplendent spheres look very esthetic but its main purpose is to house the power and water utilities to make the clubhouse run smoothly. Even the parking lots are landscaped, making every outdoor place look like a picnic ground. The lighting and the colors of the clubhouse were specifically chosen to blend with the Moroccan culture. Maintaining the light, comfortable, open-air surrounding, hues of pink, beige, rose, white and blue were used.

The clubhouse has a fine-dining restaurant and coffee shop, video game and videoke rooms, billiards and bowling lanes, business center and boutiques. The hotel rooms are more spacious than the regular hotel rooms. The VIP rooms and the duplex villas have their own kitchen, bedrooms and living room.

The main lobby is an attraction itself. To Moroccans, stargazing is a favorite pastime. Fascination with astrology and the romance of it can be best described in the mural from a 3-story high-domed ceiling to its walls at the lobby.

Total effect

Says Lim: "The total effect of the clubhouse, with its columns, archways and doors, is both imposing and palatial; yet it evokes a quiet elegance that only makes anyone who goes through the rooms and the grounds feel grand, but in a very subtle manner."

More attraction can be expected outside of the main lobby. The outdoors show the way to the pool with its deep blue tile and no constricting edge, resembling a man-made lake rather than just a swimming pool. For the ultimate variety, the pool has a shallow side, a deep end for diving and a jacuzzi. The chaise lounges, umbrella hut and gazebos are placed strategically not only to complement the landscape but also double as kiosks to serve the needs of the residents and members.

Eventually there will be a playground for youngsters and area for jetskiers and horseback riders. More columns archway and trellis lead to the court area where the sports buff can enjoy a game of basketball, tennis and other ground sports.

Lim sums it up: "We want the residents and members to have a feeling of oneness with the place, to have an ultimate enjoyment while staying at the clubhouse. With the corners and walkways, one room leads to another with more adventure for them to discover and more sights and scenes to savor while communing with nature."

BCDA officials to discuss new projects before builders

CHAIR Florencio Padernal as well as president and chief executive officer Rufo B. Colayco of the Bases Conversion Development Authority will present the agency's forthcoming projects during the monthly business luncheon meeting of the Philippine Constructors Association at the Garden Ballroom, Shangri-La Edsa Plaza Hotel tomorrow.

With its 1,500-strong nationwide membership handling 70 percent of the country's annual construction turnover, PCA president Jorge E. Manalo said the association is recognized as "the voice of the construction industry" and is articulate in government bodies involved in policy formulation and implementation.

Strong advocacy stance

Manalo said the PCA takes a strong advocacy stance on construction industry concerns and problems with the government for appropriate action, as in the case of the recent cement "war."

Remaining committed to address the issue of the current industry slump, Manalo said the PCA has taken cognizance of the BCDA effort to forge strategic partnerships with the private sector to implement master plans for sustainable growth centers and communities.

Investments

The BCDA has succeeded, he said, in attracting investments worth P214 billion as of 2000 by developing special economic zones in the former base lands and spurred local economies in host communities by generating more than 50,000 jobs in direct employment as well as various livelihood opportunities.

By knowing the new construction projects being envisioned by the BCDA, Manalo said the local construction industry would be in a better position to positively respond to the BCDA plans to ensure their success.

The PCA, he said, believes that a greater flow of government revenue would ultimately make more funds available for infrastructure projects. Since it began operations, the BCDA has turned over a total of P24.894 billion to the government coffers.

Being conscious of the BCDA mandate to generate government revenues through a viable disposition of the former military base lands, Manalo said, the PCA members would be in a better position to play an active role in furthering the expansion of the local construction industry.

Credentials

Padernal holds a civil engineering degree from Adamson University, a master's degree in business administration from Pamantasan ng Maynila, and a doctorate in public administration from Centro Escolar University. His career spans stints in various executive positions with the University of the East graduate school, the Construction and Development Corp. of the Philippines and now known as the PNCC, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Department of Finance, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the British Embassy Manila, the Kemaman Terminal One of Malaysia, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.

Colayco was president and CEO of Clark Development Corp. and Clark International Airport Corp.; co-founder and director, Argosy Partners Inc.; CEO, Kuok Group of Companies in the Philippines, which managed, among others, three Shangri-La hotels and two listed property companies and a number of other business interests of the Group; and managing director, SGV-Arthur Andersen Centre for Asia-Pacific Business, Hong Kong. He also served as managing director, project development services division; partner, management services division, and manager management services division of SGV & Co., the nation's leader in accounting and audit services.

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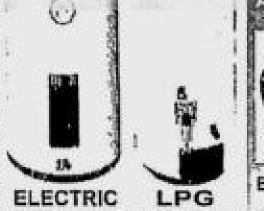

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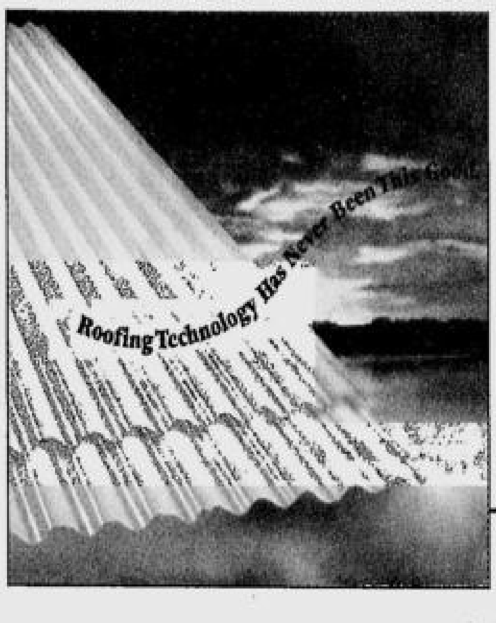

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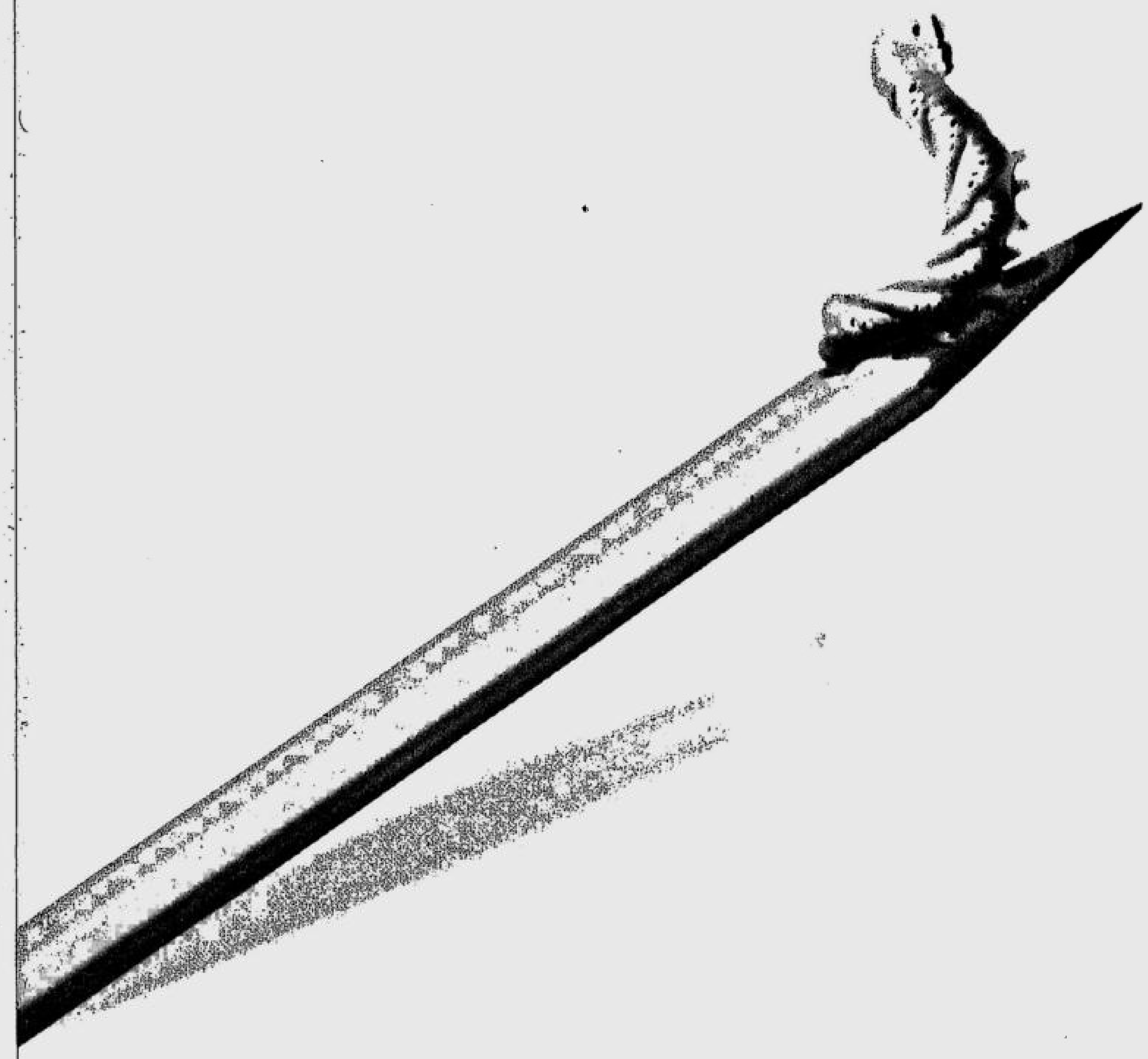

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WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

I GOT lots of e-mail and questions regarding last week's column on the dangers of taking weight-loss supplements with ephedrine (synthetic or herbal). It seems that people can easily buy these products at some health food stores, through advertisements (village newsletters, classified ads, posters on walls or lampposts) and directly through friends. Some people were frightened about their health that they have decided not to take these types of weight-loss supplements anymore. Others have the attitude of "It won't happen to me." A concerned reader told me her two friends have this attitude. They buy their supplements from another friend who purchases them from abroad.

Sometimes people have the "It will never happen to me" attitude because reading about dire statistics (like the FDA getting 800 reports of adverse ephedrine events) doesn't really hit home. It's one thing to hear about the stats, but quite another when you know the details of true-to-life stories. That's when you realize it could happen to you. So here are true ephedrine stories (paraphrased) from the documented case studies of the FDA. If they scare you from taking or stopping those ephedrine-laced supplements, good. It's not worth gambling with your health just to lose weight or have more "energy."

- A healthy 35-year-old woman who had been taking aerobic classes for several years collapsed during a class after taking one capsule of herbal diet pills three times a day for one week. Her classmates noticed that her arms and legs were twitching. Her cardiologist and neurologist found out that she suffered from heart attack and bleeding in the brain (hemorrhagic stroke). Her doctors thought the ephedrine in the diet pill induced these conditions. Laboratory analysis found that each capsule contained 12 mg (less than the 15 mg claimed on the label).
- A 22-year-old asthmatic man collapsed while lifting weights. He was taking asthma medication, regularly drinking three bottles of stimulant drink (20 mg of ephedrine and 100 mg of caffeine) per day and also taking creatine and protein supplements. His friends reported he had just consumed an 18-oz bottle of this drink before working out. The report said he had a seizure when he collapsed and went into cardiac arrest. The paramedics successfully resuscitated him but since he had suffered from lack of oxygen, he remained in a vegetative state for several weeks. After two and a half months, he was discharged with substantial neurologic impairment.
- An apparently healthy (it turned out he had a narrowing of 50-70 percent in four blood vessels leading to his heart) 38-year-old man had been taking two capsules (10 mg of ephedrine and 100 mg of caffeine) each morning for one year as directed by the product label. After taking his usual dose with a cup of coffee and jogging for 20 minutes, he collapsed and had a seizure. He was in full cardiac arrest and could not be resuscitated by the paramedics. His autopsy report included the comment, "Ephedrine is a stimulant medication, and such may have contributed to a fatal arrhythmia (abnormal heart rhythm) in the decedent."
- A healthy 39-year-old man experienced numbness in his right arm and leg one and a half hours after drinking a "stimulant" drink containing *ma huang* (415 mg) and *guarana* (an herb containing caffeine), and five minutes after running three miles. He was also taking multivitamins and amino acids. He then had hemorrhagic stroke. The numbness eventually went away, but he continued to have sensory loss on the right side of his face.
- A 23-year-old male college student used an "energy" supplement containing ephedrine for approximately two years, along with other dietary supplement products. He was known to have a healthy lifestyle. He was found dead by his sister in the apartment they shared. The medical examiner's report stated that the cause of death was a heart attack associated with ephedrine toxicity from a protein drink containing *ma huang*.
- A 28-year-old man used a product containing ephedrine for 10 months (one capsule per day) to have more energy. His father found him bloody and responding inappropriately. In the emergency department his blood pressure was 168/90, with a pulse of 116. His

TRUE/ P.C2

It's not worth gambling with your health just to lose weight or have more energy

FOR EXTRA ENERGY
STEPH

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

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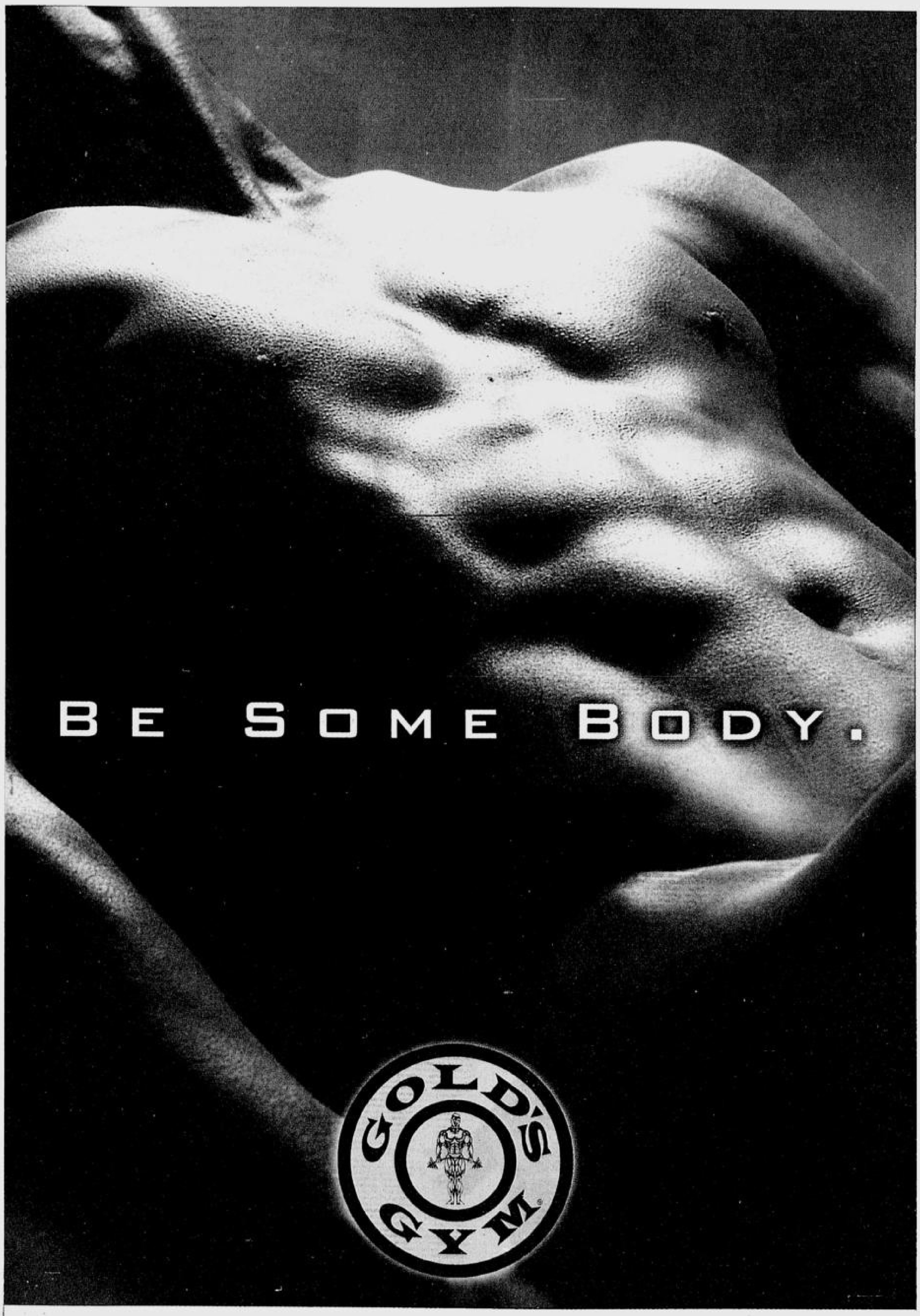

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True ephedrine stories

From page C1

neurologist concluded that "Most likely he had a seizure secondary to ephedrine" from the health food supplement he was taking. Because of the seizure, he had fallen down and hit his head. This man didn't take other medications and has no significant past medical history. In particular, he never had problems with dizziness or passing out.

- A 19-year-old woman took a weight-loss supplement containing ephedrine, one before each meal, three times per day (at one-half the recommended dosage of the manufacturer) for one month. Her family witnessed her having a seizure during mealtime and took her to the emergency room. A CT scan of her head and EEG were normal. No other products had been used and there was no significant past medical history.
- A 44-year-old man died of a heart attack approximately three weeks after beginning daily use of a dietary supplement containing ephedrine. He was an active swimmer and tennis player with no known cardiovascular risks. He took the supplement upon the advice of his family doctor when he requested a substitute for his daily coffee and cocoa. He used the product as directed and eliminated his coffee and cocoa use.
- A 35-year-old woman who was taking no other prescription or over-the-counter medications used a weight-loss supplement with ephedrine for 30 days. She discontinued using the product while on a one-week vacation. She resumed her usual dosage when she returned. The next day, while sleeping, she experienced chest pain radiating to her left shoulder and arm, numbness of the left arm and hand, and shortness of breath. The pain disappeared when the doctors gave her nitroglycerine and morphine. She has no history of cardiovascular risk factors. Since discontinuing use of the product, she has had no additional cardiac-related symptoms.

* * *

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. (AFPP) will hold a Provincial Fit Tour in Cagayan de Oro, April 26-28. Call Julie Ang at (08822) 729-880 or 726-865. The tour includes a two-day Basic Instructor Course and a one-day Fitness Workshop.

* * *

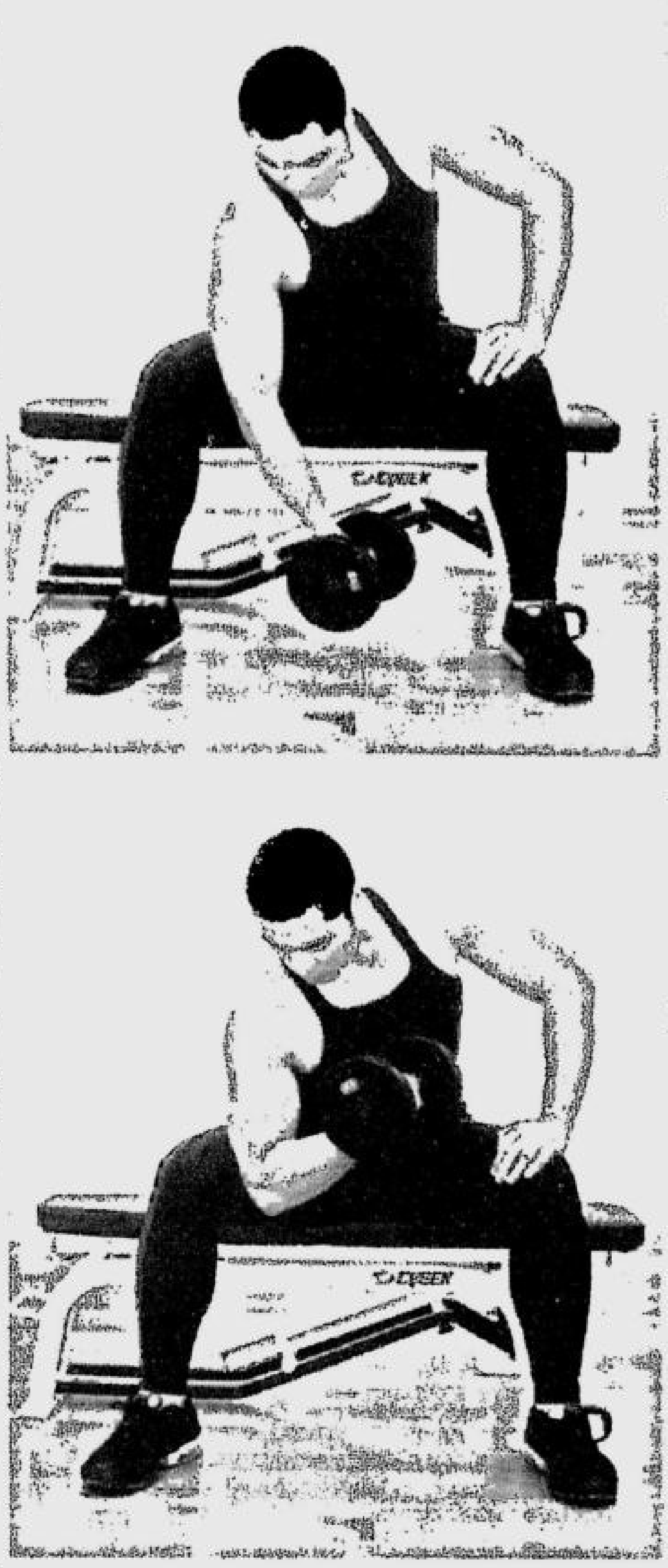
Life Fitness Academy will hold a fitness management seminar titled "How to Increase Membership Sales," May 8-9, at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Call Malou or Doris at 826-2761 or 826-0751.

* * *

The Sports Medicine Association of the Phils. (SMAP) will hold its 11th annual convention titled "Global Trends & Local Issues in Sports" on May 17 and 18 at the Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita. Call 521-9123, fax 522-2374 or e-mail sportsmedphil@yahoo.com.

For inquiries or past articles and exercises, visit www.tinajuanfitness.com

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Concentration biceps curl

THIS exercises focuses on the biceps, the muscles in front of the upper arm.

Equipment:

Bench or stool and dumbbells

Exercise technique:

1. Sit at the edge of a bench or stool with your legs separated, knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Holding a dumbbell in one hand, lean forward from the hip and place your arm above the elbow against the inner thigh.
2. Brace yourself by holding your thigh with the other hand.
3. Curl the dumbbell by tightening and contracting your bicep.
4. Slowly lower the dumbbell and repeat until you finish the desired number of repetitions.
5. Repeat with the other hand.

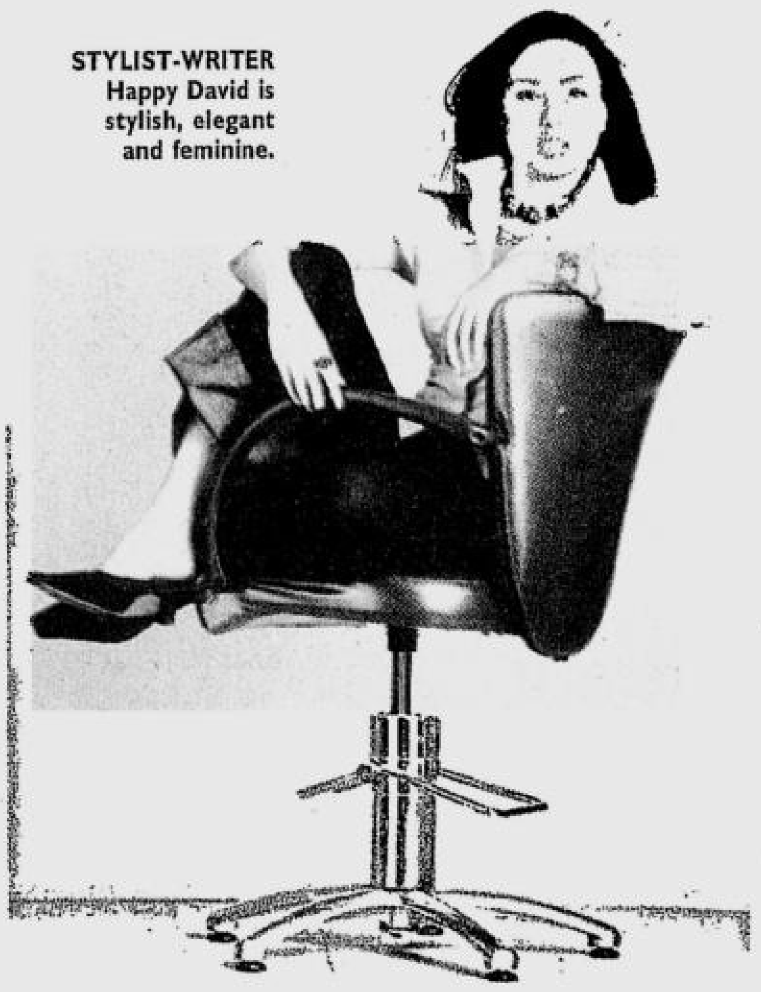
Performance tips:

1. Lean forward from the hip. Avoid rounding your back. Your legs should be separated far enough that you have freedom of movement with the dumbbell.
2. Avoid bending your wrist as you curl the dumbbell.
3. Perform the exercise slowly. Avoid using momentum to swing the dumbbell up and down.
4. Keep your shoulders and trunk steady as you perform the curls.

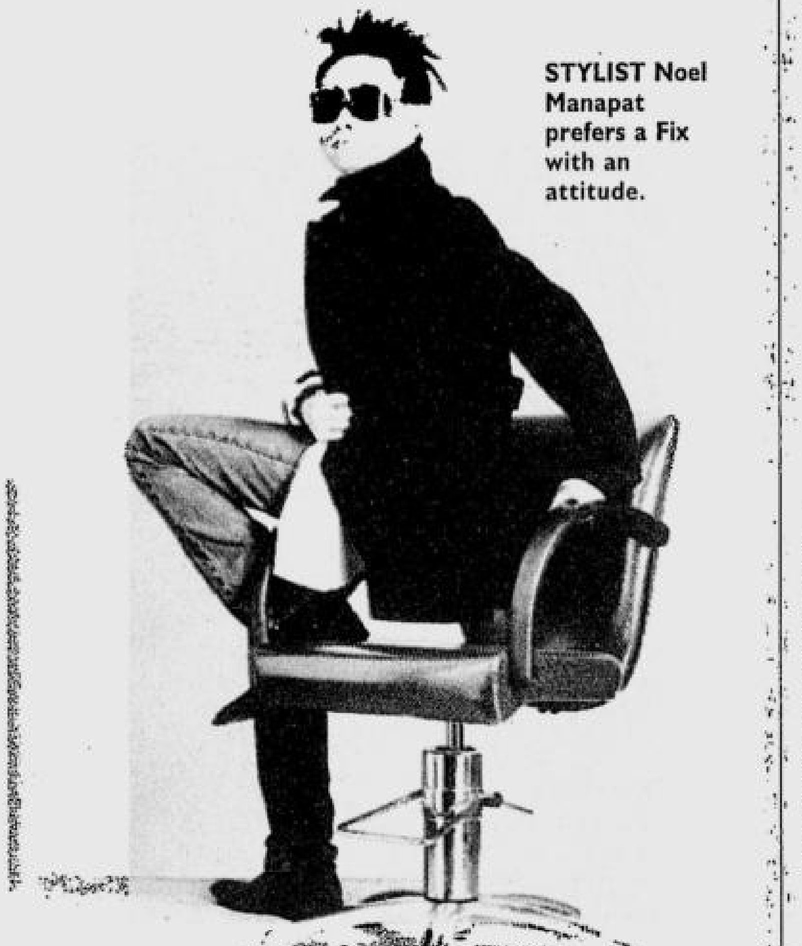
Repetitions:

If you want larger biceps, use a weight that will fatigue your muscles in eight to 12 repetitions. Do one to three sets.

If you want toned biceps but do not want to increase muscle size, use a weight that will fatigue your muscles in 15-20 repetitions. Do one to three sets.



STYLIST-WRITER Happy David is stylish, elegant and feminine.



STYLIST Noel Manapat prefers a Fix with an attitude.

Salon gives 8 celebs new look

MODEL Gem Padilla goes classic with her long wavy tresses.

FIX Bench Salon recently gathered some of the country's celebrities for an afternoon of hairstyling and makeup—fashion designer Rhett Eala, fashion stylist Noel Manapat, supermodel Gem Padilla, Mega editor Liza Ilarde, L'Oréal's Luxury Division brand manager Tina Tinio, INQUIRER's 2bU! correspondent Happy David, model Gary Dulatas and up-and-coming Star Circle Batch 10 member Aaron Concepcion.

Rhett's hair was playfully moussed. Always hip and trendy, Noel went for a punk buzz cut that emphasized his sense of individuality. For Gem, it's supple curls for her lovely mane. The makeup, mostly soft colors, enhanced her features.

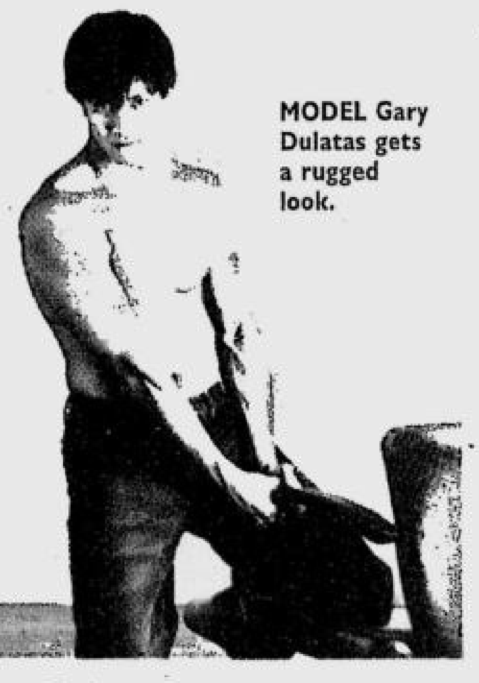
With her hair styled with fringes that softened her angular cheekbones, and makeup that highlighted her gorgeous almond-shaped eyes, fashion magazine editor Liza Ilarde struck a balance between hauteur and fragility.

Tina's bubbly personality shone through with her chic layered-cut hair and au naturelle makeup. And, of course, the whole effect would not be complete without that beguiling Tinio smile.

Young and cool Happy David upped her fashion ante with a funky hairstyle that accentuated her pretty face. Gary Dulatas, with his smart haircut, was a picture of vitality and masculinity. Lastly, show biz newcomer Aaron Concepcion, with his short, cropped hair, looked every inch the cool teenager that he is.

DESIGNER Rhett Eala gets a fashionably simple cut.

STAR Circle Batch 10 member Aaron Concepcion gets a youthful cut.



MODEL Gary Dulatas gets a rugged look.

Digging deeper into root cause of hair woes

FRIZZY, dull or thin hair and dandruff are the usual complaints of women about their hair. All such problems are due to damage of the cuticle, the hair's outer layer or covering.

A study of Procter & Gamble shows the many roles of hair cuticle, primarily the protection of the cortex from mechanical damage and penetration of destructive elements.

Cuticle damage is irreversible and can lead to a loss of shine, increase in hair roughness, unmanageability and ultimately split ends and broken strands. It is caused by friction or abrasion from frequent combing and brushing, and stretching of hair that ruptures the nonkeratinous regions of the cuticle and makes the cortex vulnerable to the penetration of chemicals and harmful substances.

Thus, the key to healthy and beautiful hair lies in the protection and care of the cuticle, which involves various cleansing and conditioning ingredients that: a) make hair smooth, straight and silky, b) make it fully moisturized and simply but absolutely clean, c) strengthen it while preventing the recurrence of dandruff and, d) make to look at least twice thicker in volume than it really is. These formulations are now available in four new variants of Pantene Pro-V shampoo and conditioner—New Pantene Smooth and Silky, Balance Clean, Anti-Dandruff and Volume and Fullness.

Clinical tests conducted by P&G showed that New Pantene Smooth and Silky could transform frizzy hair into straighter, smoother hair; New Pantene Balance Clean could turn dull hair into perfectly moisturized and simply clean hair; New Pantene Anti-Dandruff could prevent the recurrence of dandruff while strengthening hair, and New Pantene Volume and Fullness could make hair look up to two times thicker and up to two times more volume.

The tests, conducted on Asian women, yielded the Pro-V proof that each of the four variants could achieve its specific purpose in just 10 days of constant use.

Pantene transformation booths will be set up soon in Metro Manila to allow consumers to experience the benefits of Pantene Pro-V while giving them free hair analysis and consultation.

Country club offers sports clinic

YOU should now be on the lookout for summer activities that will help you beat the heat and also keep you healthy. Club Malarayat Golf and Country Club invites its members and guests this April and May to a summer sports clinic that will offer gymnastics, badminton, tennis, taekwondo and swimming.

For two years now, the clinic has been supported by Milo whose trainers make up most of the training personnel. The training sessions will be held at Club Malarayat's sports venues.

The gymnastics package is offered for P3,300; badminton for beginners, P1,200 and advance, P950; tennis for beginners, P2,000, intermediate/advance, P2,500; taekwondo, P2,200 and swimming, P2,000. The fee already includes one Club Malarayat T-shirt upon registration and one snack per day per child.

Call the sales and marketing department at (043) 756-7006 or Children's Country Club at (043) 756-7009.

EYE-CATCHING SHADES

The new collection of Romeo Gigli is as hot as summer: Zen Orange, India Turquoise, Amethyst Violet, Sunset Pink, Earth, Chocolate, Cocoa, Wood. The typical unisex "mask" is also available this season in a new, flat matte metal frame that resembles a sole rectangle that curves around the face. The collection exudes class, style and boldness of spirit. Available in Sabater Pascual Optical shops.

ROMEO GIGLI
EYEWEAR

New pill for treatment of obese patients

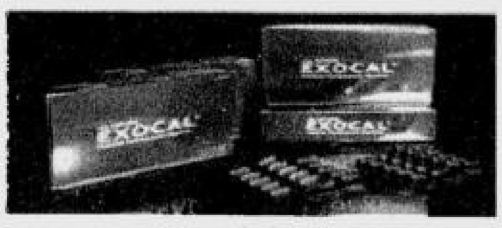
AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL launch of the diet pill Exofat, now comes Exocal. Packed with 17 amino acids, Exocal increases energy levels by helping the body utilize excess calorie intake, balance glucose index levels, suppress hunger and sugar cravings, accelerate the body's metabolic process and provide essential nutrients.

New Exocal is indicated for long-term treatment of overweight and obese patients, particularly in cases where carbohydrate sensitivity is suggested. These patients include those with risk factors associated with obesity, in conjunction with a mildly hypocaloric diet.

Dosage

The recommended dose of Exocal is two 500 mg tablet with each main meal (before or after). If a meal is missed or contains no calories from carbohydrate source, the dose of Exocal may be omitted.

Exocal is BFAD-approved as an over-the-counter supplement. It is now available in leading drugstores nationwide. Call the Exocal Call Center at 638-1691 to 93.



ASCOF Syrup is the first licensed herbal medicine in syrup form from the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) through the Department of Science and Technology. It has been studied and scientifically validated for more than 20 years by the National Integrated Research Program on Medicinal Plants, a consortium of top academic institutions and scientists in the country. Ascof Syrup comes in 60 ml and 120 ml and available in all leading drugstores nationwide. Call 411-9907 or 920-1911 to 15.

Workshop

THE PHILIPPINES Diabetes Association Inc. will hold its 22nd Diabetes Workshop on April 27-28 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The workshop will consist of lectures, clinical case discussions and wet clinics to equip general practitioners, family physicians and internists with the necessary tools to treat and manage diabetes mellitus. Call Ruth Gelito at the PDA office at 531-1278 or 534-9595.

PROFESSIONAL LIFE SIGNS ACCORD WITH EAP
Professional Life Insurance Corporation signed a Memorandum of Agreement with EA Phil. Inc. (EAP), the Philippine marketing arm of Europ Assistance Worldwide Services Pte. Ltd., as its assistance service provider. Member policyholders of Professional Life may call EAP collect 24 hours a day to request medical services from any of the 140 accredited hospitals and medical facilities of EAP nationwide. Present during the contract-signing were (L-R) Veronica J. Leonardo, Professional Life AVP and associate medical director; Manuel M. Alfonso, Professional Life EVP for group insurance division; Eulogio A. Mendoza, Professional Life president and CEO; Kathy C. Tamayo, EAP general manager; and Reymon L. de Real, EAP sales and marketing officer.

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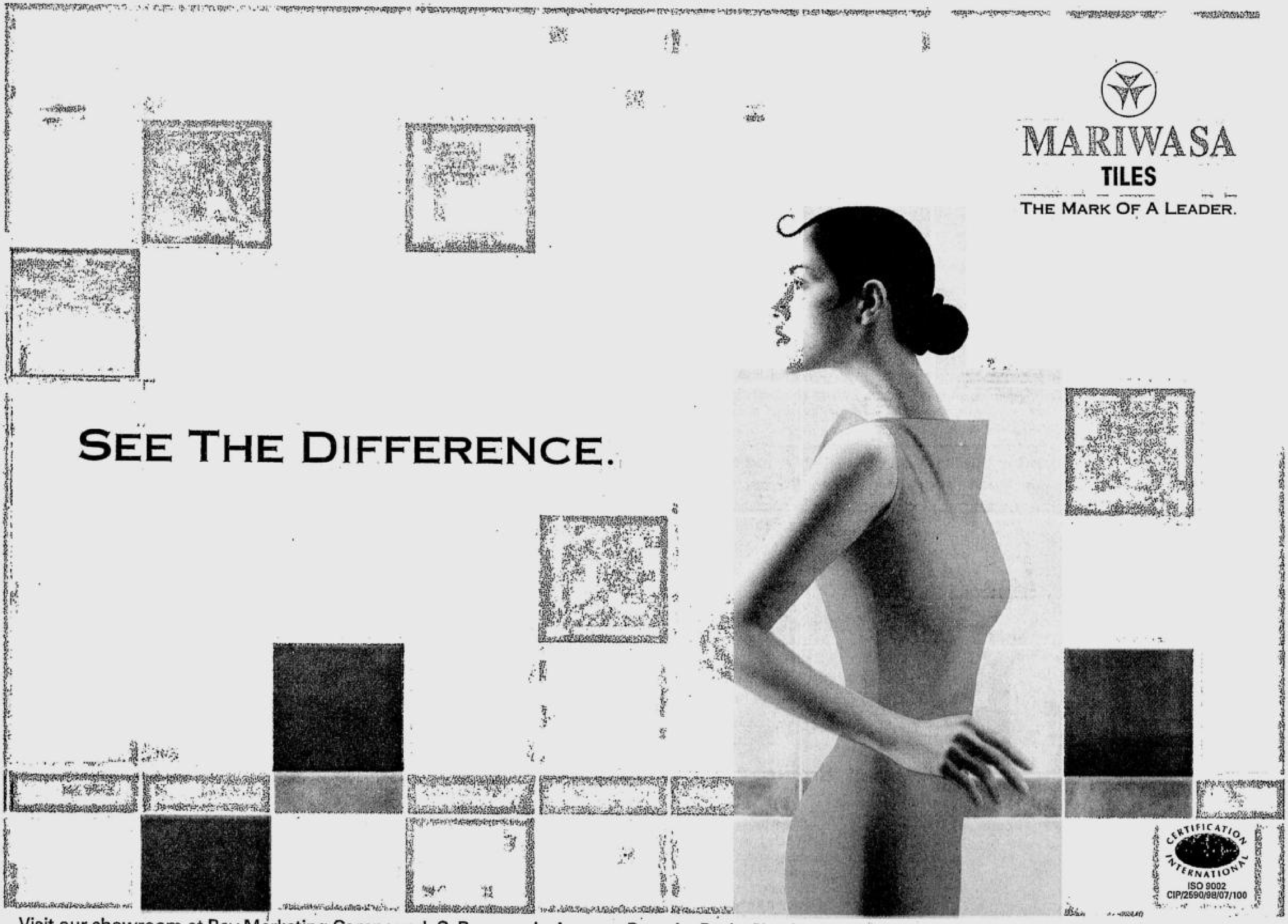

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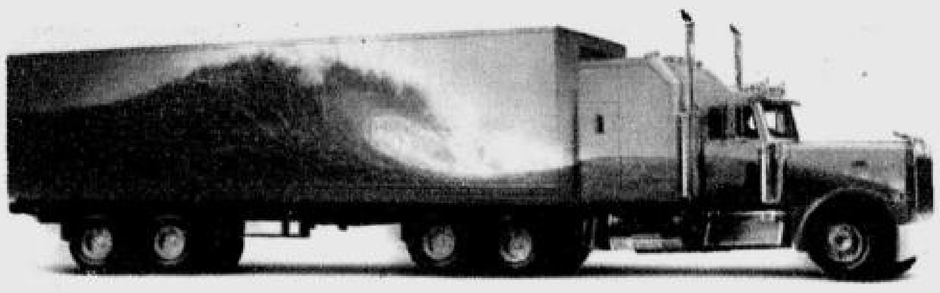

Patag man.

Are you sexually fit?

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

NEW discoveries in the field of health are never-ending. This is the reason my information resource is almost endless. Because new truths replace old ones with great speed, it is imperative that my research be current.

Visiting Page One at the Power Plant, I looked for the latest trends in the US, one of which is sexual fitness. In a revealing report, Dr. Hank Wuh and Mei-mei Fox, authors of "Sexual Fitness," explained that there are seven essential elements to achieve sensuality and satisfaction. This is because sex is considered one of the most important biological functions in life and holds the key to our wellbeing and self-esteem.

Essentials

Diet. Food is fuel. If what you eat is high-octane, then your body can run like a racecar. One must cut down on fat and sugar and sodium. In short, a health-friendly eating plan, which includes vegetables, fruits and clean water, is a must.

Supplements. Vitamins and minerals should be part of your shopping list. A multivitamin-mineral supplement should be the answer to our nutritional needs.

Exercise. It is a known fact that exercise stimulates your brain to release endorphins—the "feel-good" hormones. Also, the psychological advantages are numerous, one of them is being proud of your body, thus raising your confidence level.

> Diet, supplements, exercise, stress reduction are the essential elements in achieving satisfaction

Sleep. Six to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep is enough rest time for your body to recharge.

Stress reduction. Because stress is the No. 1 cause of aging, one must learn to relax. One of the surest ways to soften the blow of stress on our system is to learn to "get away from it all" or to switch off. And you can do it in an instant without leaving your home or office.

Sensual stimulation. Lay the groundwork for romance. Surround yourself with good food, great wine, soothing music, pleasant surroundings and mood lighting to complete the scenario.

Medication. There are medications for ulcers, diabetes and hypertension that can interfere with sexual health. Also, the help given by prescription drugs like Viagra is a medical intervention that has enhanced sexual fitness among men.

Paradise found

1. Connect with yourself by practicing slow breathing.

2. Once calm, transport yourself to a place of tranquility. This is your very own sanctuary—whether it is on a mountaintop, seashore or an ice palace. Mark this place as your own hideaway. Once there, imagine yourself in your little corner of the world and repeat the affirmation "I am happy and contented." From now on, you must run to this place every time you get agitated. Hold that vision and feeling for seven minutes.

Taking control

It is absolutely possible to take charge of your life—especially your sex life. And if you pay attention you can optimize your sexual health by changing your lifestyle. Studies have proven that there is a strong connection between sex and health. You can achieve sexual satisfaction only when you're in good health.

So strive for sexual fitness. One need not feel trapped by genes, age and a hectic life.

Fact: Sexually active couples look and feel younger than their non-sexually active counterparts. And because sex plays a critical role in marriage, research shows that marital satisfaction has a direct correlation with sexual satisfaction. It becomes an avenue for emotional intimacy and trust among couples. And without it, relationships may suffer.

Myth: With age, bodies deteriorate and the level of sexual enjoyment drops. There are no normal levels of sexual activity. What is important therefore is a satisfied sex drive, at any age.

Prescription

For men: American ginseng, 100 mg; Korean ginseng, 100 mg; ginkgo biloba, 50 mg; L-arginine, 3,000 mg; folic acid, 400 mg; thiamin, antioxidants, A, C, E, selenium and zinc—minimum daily requirement.

For women: Korean ginseng, 100 mg; ginkgo biloba, 50 mg; L-arginine, 250 mg; A, C, E, zinc, iron—9 mg; niacin, 20 mg; calcium, riboflavin, biotin, thiamin.

Herbal boosters

While ginseng and ginkgo biloba claim 5,000 years of medicinal benefits for blood circulation, there are other natural herbs and substances worth considering such as *kava-kava*, saw palmetto (for men), *dong qual*, *avena sativa* (green oats), *miura puana*, bee products (pollen, honey and royal jelly), evening primrose oil (for women) and cranberry juice.

Taboos

Spanish fly, powdered substance from the beetle, may initially have circulation benefits but with side effects like urinary and gastrointestinal disorders. Yohimbe and animal parts like rhinocerus horn, deer antler, bear's testicles also carry unfavorable side effects.

Feel-good masks

Want to raise yours and your partner's own sensuality? Try this sexy body mask especially designed for couples.

1 c rock salt or sugar
2 tbsp olive oil
1-2 c honey

Mix the oil and salt/sugar. Rub it all over the body—from neck to foot. Shower with warm water. Shake off excess salt/sugar. Do not soap. In slow, smooth strokes apply honey (cool to the touch). Leave it for two minutes. Massage longer if you wish. Take a cool shower and lather with soap.

Your skin will feel tingly and pleasantly cool.

Life can only be as exciting as we make it. Our bodies need to be healthy in order to enjoy life's pleasures.

* * *

The public is invited to my forthcoming book launching. Experience a beauty and wellness weekend free of charge, May 11-12 at the main lobby of the Power Plant. Activities include: aerobics fun match, yoga, Pilates, healthy heart cooking, pranic healing orientation, free beauty makeovers and facial and skin care and body care consultations, health talks by noted speakers, Latin dance workout. Special appearance by PBA champs, Shark, Plinky Recto, Poncy Quirino and the Philippine Body Builders Association. Call 637-9653/9655.

E-mail the author at coryquirino_fy@yahoo.com

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FAQs (frequently asked questions)

I received an invitation from your office to MEDICard's ClubMED. What is it and is it open to all members?

ClubMED is part of the preventive health management program of MEDICard. It is not a membership organization. ClubMED focuses on prevention as a key to good health by sponsoring regular training programs and seminars on current health issues, health habits, diet and nutrition, illnesses and even alternative methods of medicine. It also offers a wide-range of physical fitness training programs such as yoga and Tae-Bo. **ClubMED is open to all MEDICard members--FREE OF CHARGE.** You may call 810-2775 or 840-2020 loc. 2015 for ClubMED's schedule for the month of May or for reservations and queries. Visit our web site to download a printable version of the schedule.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Marieleise G. Velarde -Afable is MEDICard's accredited Pediatrician based in the World Citi Medical Center (formerly QCMC). Dr. Afable joined MEDICard's medical service team in 1999. She finished her specialization training in Pediatrics at the Philippine Children's Medical Center and subspecializes in Pediatric Hematology and Oncology. She is a Fellow to the Philippine Pediatric Society and a Diplomate to the Philippine Society in Hematology and Blood Transfusion. Doc Marieleise is married and has one child. Outside her clinical practice, she spends most of her time with her family. She is also fond of shopping and collects Beanie Babies as her hobby. You may visit Dr. Afable for your consultation needs at room 218 of the WCMC, from Mondays to Fridays except Thursdays, 9AM to 1 in the afternoon.

MEDICard accredited specialist in Jesus C. Delgado Memorial Hospital in Quezon City is **Dr. Patria A. Villalon**. Dr. Villalon or Dr. Pat to most, is a graduate of Medicine from Manila Central University. She specializes in Pediatrics and subspecializes in Pediatric Allergology. She is a Fellow to the Philippine Medical Association and the Philippine Pediatric Society and a member of the Allergologists Society of the Philippines. Visit Dr. Patria for your consultation needs at room B3 of Delgado Memorial Hospital, Mondays to Saturdays from 8 to 10 in the morning.

MEDICard's Medical Coordinator in St. John Hospital in Naga City is **Dr. Jose C. Rañola.** Doc Sonny, as he is to most is also the current Medical Director of the hospital. Doc Sonny has more than 30 years of clinical practice and is active in philantrophic work. He is the founder of *Salamat Po Doktor Foundation*, a foundation giving medical assistance to indigents through free medicines, consultations and hospitalization. For all your medical needs at St. John Hospital in Naga City, visit Dr. Jose Rañola at the coordinator's office, from Mondays to Saturdays, 8 AM to 5 in the afternoon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 840-2020 local 2017 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. For group or corporate membership, dial local 2049 and look for a membership consultant.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com.

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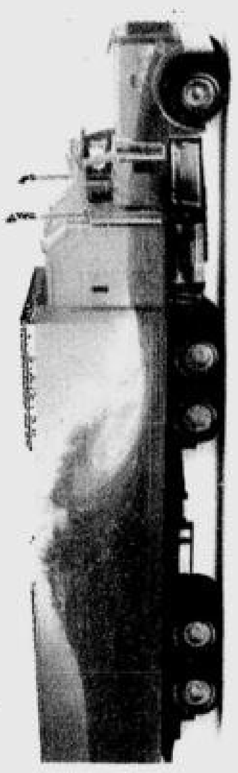

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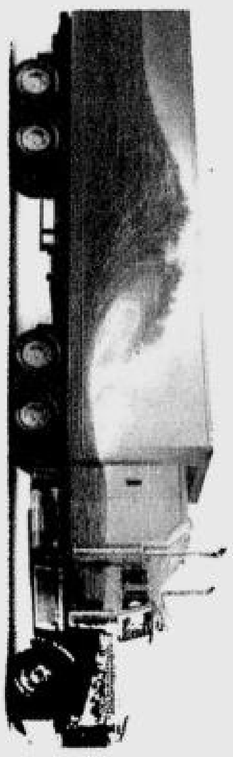

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Erap to testify vs Jancom in House probe today

STORY ON PAGE A2

'GMA cares,' taxpayers foot bill

MALAPIT
NA TALAGA
ANG ELECTION

By Armand N. Nocum

COME June, she's going to be in mass circulation through P200 bills. But already, she's up there where one cannot miss her.

GMA/A20

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Solons want water contract reviewed**
NEWS / A7
- **Manero cleared of killings**
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e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, April 24, 2002 ★★ 76 pages / 6 sections / vol.17 / no. 135 P15 website: www.inq7.net

'Those people have never been for me'

Despite clarifications, solons say probe needed

"THOSE people were always against me," President Macapagal-Arroyo said last night during a live television interview in reacting to an INQUIRER report Tuesday that a group calling itself Freedom Force was allegedly proposing the formation of a junta to replace her administration.

The President told the GMA-7 newscast, "Saksi" that even if the proponents of Freedom Force "somehow helped in Edsa II," they had not wanted her to assume the presidency. "They were the ones who wanted a collective leadership," she said.

"They have never been allied with me," she continued.

Told by news anchor Mel Tiangco that the key players of Freedom Force had denied any plans to form a junta, the President said, "I'll take their word for it . . . At the moment they are ready to reconcile with me."

"I know she (the President) is trying her best, but some of her advisers are not handling the problems (of the country and the government) very well," former Tarlac Rep. Jose Cojuangco, a brother of former President Corazon Aquino, said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

Cojuangco confirmed the existence of Freedom Force of which he is a member, and justified its existence.

Current conditions are not satisfactory, and "extremists" can take advantage of the situation to bring the country to martial law, he said yesterday.

"We're afraid that existing conditions might be conducive for some people to go (in) that direction (martial law)," said Cojuangco, who's a ranking member of the Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa).

THOSE/A6

JOAN BONDOC

"THERE is no perfect leadership. I am not in favor of 'the collective leadership' that you were talking about," Cardinal Sin writes in a letter after a meeting with the Freedom Force proponents.

LIMCAOCO: He leaked the story to expose the alleged plotters.

How the Inquirer got 'junta' story

By Christine Herrera

IT WAS Conrado "Dodi" Limcaoco of the People Power Coalition who told the INQUIRER on Monday of the supposed junta being planned by the Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa) and other groups.

Limcaoco, President Macapagal-Arroyo's newly appointed adviser on ecclesiastical and media affairs, said the Copa's Pastor "Boy" Saycon, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, Teodoro Benigno and Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza, among others, had a meeting with Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin "three days ago" at the latter's residence in Villa San Miguel.

Limcaoco said he was not present at the meeting at Villa San Miguel, but that he was informed as to those who were present and what transpired.

It was he who provided the INQUIRER the

HOW/A6

What happened in meeting with Sin

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

BEFORE WE are sucked into another of those coup scenarios that proliferate tirelessly to rattle the politically insecure Macapagal administration, let us be warned that much importance has been given to a meeting on April 15 between Cardinal Jaime Sin and a group identified as "Freedom Force."

This group was reported to be a front for a junta seeking to replace President Macapagal-Arroyo. Since several coup specters have raised their heads since the May 1 rebellion against the Macapagal administration, I decided to do some investigation the results of which are as follows:

1. Freedom Force is not sponsored by The Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa), the militant group that was one of the first to call for the resignation of President Joseph Estrada after the outbreak of the jueteng scandal exposed by ex-Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

2. Most of the eight or so people who talked with the cardinal at Villa San Miguel from 3 p.m. were not Copa members, except primarily Copa secretary general Pastor "Boy" Saycon. The others in the group include Star columnist Teodoro Benigno, who resigned from Copa eight months ago, Joan Orendain, Philippine National Police Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza, a friend of Benigno's, Cesar Sarino, Vince Pacheco and Nick Locsin.

3. According to Benigno, Fianza and Orendain, the matter of a junta was never taken up with Cardinal Sin, and I am inclined to believe them. Benigno said the report on a

WHAT/A6

Black Hawks up: PAF pilots to fly US attack choppers

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—"A dream come true." Pilots of the Philippine Air Force's 15th Strike Wing will have the flight of their life today, thanks to the Luzon version of the RP-US Balikatan military exercise.

For the first time, they will be flying two types of top-of-the-line attack helicopters made popular in movies and TV shows: the Cobra and the Black Hawk, the sophisticated choppers which have seen combat in the Middle East and Africa.

The US Air Force is making two Cobras and two Black Hawks available to wing members, according to PAF Col. Danilo Ferrer. PAF pilots will get their hands-on training at the Atienza Air Base in Sangley Point, Cavite, during an orientation called the "Sangley Friendship Day."

For PAF pilots whose constant companions are OV-10 bomber planes and hand-

BLACK HAWKS/A20

GAMES the President plays, this one in Malolos, Bulacan, where she visits a typical nipa hut and feels right at home as its proportion is a perfect fit for the petite President.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Gunmen kill 3 Palestinians suspected as Israeli agents

HEBRON, West Bank—Hooded gunmen yesterday killed three fellow Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel, taking swift vengeance for an Israeli missile strike that killed two Palestinian militants only several hours before. A mob strung up two of the battered, bullet-punctured bodies, and some Palestinians even brought their children to the scene. The executions—the second such incident in two days—raised concerns about lawlessness in the West Bank after the Israeli military pullout over the weekend left the Palestinian Authority gravely weakened.

Violence continued to stalk the area, with seven Palestinians and one Israeli soldier reported killed in a 24-hour period. A diplomatic initiative that could help erase some of the confusion concerning the death toll in the last three weeks—the naming of the members of the UN fact-finding mission to Jenin—also drew heavy criticism from Israel, casting a shadow over the relief and recovery process underway in the devastated refugee camp.

US Undersecretary of State William Burns met Palestinian

GUNMEN/A20

GenSan bombers trained by Malaysians, say cops

TWO men detained for their alleged role in the explosions in General Santos on Sunday that left 15 people dead were trained in bomb-making by Malaysian militants, police said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, national police spokesperson, said the suspected bombers were believed to be former Moro separatist rebels and part of a 10-man terrorist cell operating in the city.

"Initially the findings are that they are lost command rebels and that, number two, they trained in Malaysia for bomb-making," Espina said. Lost command is a term used for renegade members of Moro separatist groups in Mindanao.

Espina did not identify the alleged Malaysian militant group that trained the two in bomb-making. Investigation is still ongoing to determine whether they were affiliated with terrorist groups operating in the region, he said, adding that police were on the trail of eight more suspects.

Earlier reports said the two suspects, identified as Bobby Sabilo and Maliquin Ampi, were members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Espina said Commander Benjie Puntuan, an MNLF bomb expert, was the leader of the 10-member terrorist cell in the city. Puntuan managed to escape Monday when policemen swooped down on his hideout. Sabilo and Ampi were arrested during the raid.

A unit of the MNLF has disowned the suspects and the Abu Sayyaf has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Warning of more violence, the Abu Sayyaf said the attacks were carried out in retaliation for a joint US-Philippine operation against them in Basilan.

GENSAN/A20

JOAN BONDOC

Erap docu on TV

THE CAMP of Joseph Estrada will mark the first anniversary of his arrest tomorrow with the first ever TV airing of the documentary "Ama ng Masa," which is mainly the story of Edsa 2 and 3 as told from the ousted president's perspective.

Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino yesterday said "Ama" will be aired by the Iglesia ni Cristo-owned Net25 at 9 p.m. tomorrow.

Released by the Estrada camp around December 2001, "Ama" videodiscs had reportedly found their way into urban poor communities where the jailed ex-president claims to maintain a loyal following.

Second FRONT PAGE

MGA PRESIDENTE ANG TESTIGO!

Erap to testify today vs Jancom contract

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christian V. Esguerra

JAILED ex-President Joseph Estrada will be testifying today at the House inquiry into the controversial P350-billion garbage contract with the Jancom Environmental Corp.

Robert Aventajado, Estrada's flagship projects adviser who junked the Jancom contract in favor of the Pro-Environment Corp., has also been summoned, said Misamis Oriental Rep. Augusto Baculio, chair of the ecology committee.

Estrada is reported to have claimed that Jancom had offered him a 20 percent commission in exchange for approving the contract.

Former President Fidel Ramos, who has also been invited, has agreed to testify next month when he returns from a foreign trip.

The two ex-presidents will be asked to explain why they had refused to sign the Jancom deal, which had been negotiated during their watch.

Jancom officials have denied that Ramos and Estrada rejected the deal.

Baculio said the testimony of the two ex-presidents would help determine whether the contract should be honored by the government or junked.

Ex-presidents stories

Baculio said Aventajado was being summoned after Jancom vice president for corporate affairs Ernesto Banawis testified in a previous hearing that Jancom did not meet with Estrada but only with Aventajado.

In a recent decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the Jancom contract was valid but said it could not be implemented without the signature of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The President has stated she would not sign the "flawed contract" but left it to the Metro Manila Development Authority to review it.

Baculio and Rep. Nereo Acosta have called for a rebidding of the project amid charges by Jancom's rivals and environmentalist groups that the Jancom deal was overpriced and violated the Clean Air Act's prohibition against incineration.

The Greenpeace environmental group yesterday threatened to file contempt charges against Jancom for allegedly duping the public in the P350-billion garbage deal.

'Fooling the SC'

Greenpeace said Jancom's reported willingness to downscale its incineration technology and cut its expensive tipping fee proved that it has been "fooling the Supreme Court, the government and the people all along."

"Why did we have to go through all these troubles when Jancom could have made these compromises much earlier?" said Francis de la Cruz, Greenpeace toxics campaigner for Southeast Asia.

Amid angry protests from environmental groups, the MMDA has decided to renegotiate the contract with Jancom to hammer out what it called a "win-win solution."

BSP chief: I'm no 'sipsip'

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday rejected accusations that the central bank was toadying to the boss when it approved the issuance of a new P200 note featuring President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The monetary authorities are not politicians. And not being politicians, it did not occur to us that putting the image of the President on the new P200 bill would be viewed as political gimmickry," said Buenaventura.

He noted that neither he nor the five other members of the Monetary Board were appointees of Ms Arroyo and therefore did not need to "make *sipsip*" (brownnose) as some groups have claimed.

Buenaventura said the BSP would push through with the unveiling of the new P200 note on June 12 to mark the country's 104th year of independence.
Clarissa S. Batiño

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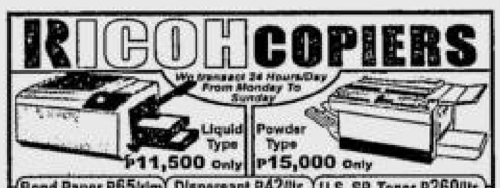

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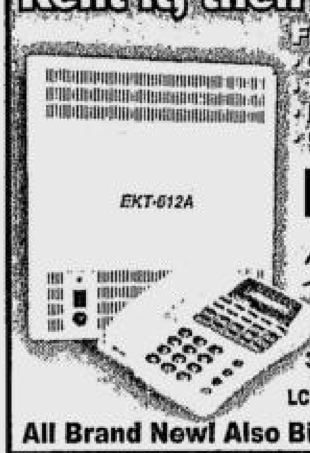

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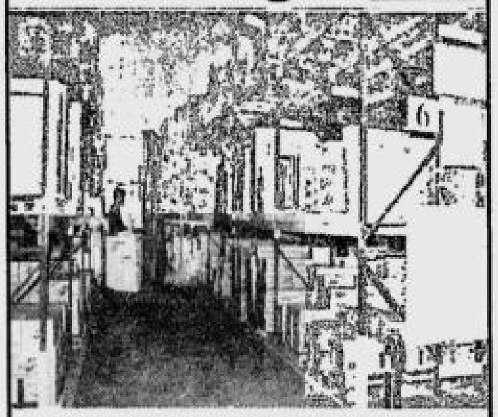

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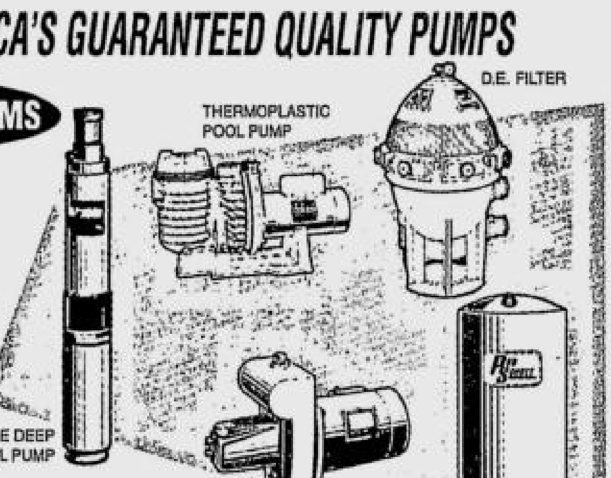
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SC denies Nur's bid for trial transfer

THE SUPREME Court yesterday denied with finality the request of jailed Muslim leader Nur Misuari to transfer the hearing of the rebellion case against him by the government from Sta. Rosa, Laguna to Jolo, Sulu.

Voting 13-0, the high court said Misuari's lawyers "have not presented cogent, substantial or compelling arguments to convince us to grant their motions."

The April 15 arraignment of Misuari, his spiritual adviser Abu Harris Usman and six others was reset by Sta. Rosa regional trial court Judge, Norberto Geraldez to May 15 after defense lawyers argued that the SC has not yet denied with finality their request for a transfer of venue.

Misuari and his men are being held for their complicity in the bloody Nov. 19, 2001 siege of an Army camp in Jolo.

"Misuari et al have not presented adequate proof that the alleged negative publicity has caused extreme prejudice to them to such extent as to deprive them of due process. Speculation or suspicion is not equivalent to proof" the high tribunal said in its two-page decision.

The SC actually ruled on the three motions filed by the defense "which partake the nature of motion of reconsiderations" for its earlier orders.

The high court struck down the defense's argument that the Sta. Rosa RTC had no jurisdiction over the case.

"Unarguably, RTCs have jurisdiction over the crimes imputed against the accused," the court said.

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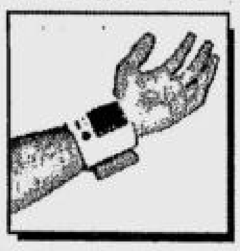

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Gloria OKs draft of anti-terror accord over Guingona objection

By Rocky Nazareno

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will be taking the final text of a trilateral agreement on terrorism when she goes on a working visit to Malaysia on May 7.

Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona said yesterday that the President had approved the final text of the Trilateral Agreement on Terrorism that the country is concluding with Indonesia and Malaysia and would witness the signing of the final draft in Kuala Lumpur.

But a ranking foreign affairs official said Guingona had withheld his approval of the text because it did not include an amendment that he had proposed.

Guingona had wanted a phrase defining terrorism as "threatening the stability, territorial integrity, political unity or sovereignty of independent states" deleted.

The vice president believes it could set back the gains made by the government in pursuing peace negotiations with communist and Moro insurgents, the official said.

The source said Malacañang might have balked at adopting Guingona's proposal because it was not acceptable to Indonesia and Malaysia.

The President will be visiting Malaysia and Thailand on May 7 and 8, Malacañang announced yesterday.

Ms Macapagal will be delivering the keynote address at the 35th general meeting of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC).

She intends to invite the PBEC's businessmen members to invest in the country's energy sector, Malacañang said.

The President will take up with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad the welfare of Filipinos living in Sabah, many of whom were recently repatriated.

She will fly to Thailand, also on May 7, for a two-day official visit.

She will have an expanded meeting with Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

She will meet with the Filipino community in Thailand, have a luncheon meeting with Thai business leaders and have an audience with the King of Thailand before flying back to Manila on May 8.

The approval of the terrorism agreement is the latest in a series of foreign policy-related decisions that Malacañang has made without the approval of the foreign secretary.

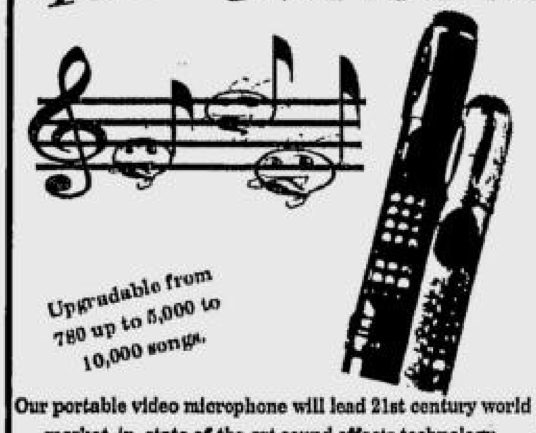
Malacañang adopted a new process in approving planned military exercises that would not require the approval of the foreign secretary during the crucial decision-making involving the joint Balikatan exercises with the United States.

Sources at the department said this was made to bypass Guingona who is known to be opposed to US military presence in the country.

The DFA source said Guingona's non-approval of the terrorism agreement could be the reason why Foreign Undersecretary Lauro Baja and not the foreign secretary would be signing the agreement.

"(But) since Guingona acts as caretaker of the government whenever the President is away, it would be (a good excuse for) why Baja will be signing the agreement," the source said.

"Not everybody in Manila agrees with (Guingona) too. Malacañang wasn't really receptive to his amendment," the official said.



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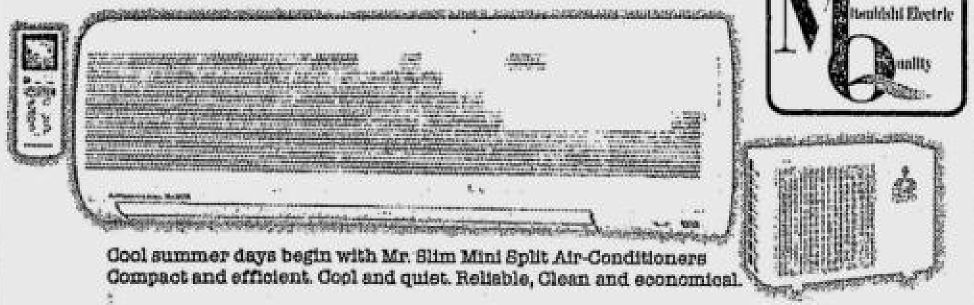

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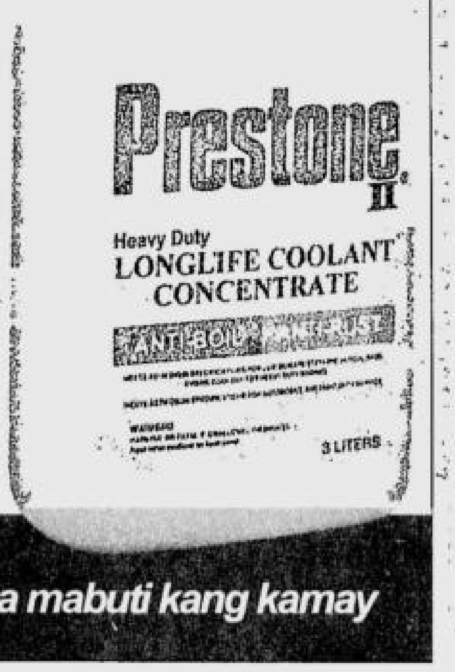

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What happened in meeting with Sin

From page A1

junta was "absolute garbage," and so was the report that the group sought to depose President Macapagal with the aid of a number of generals, the business community, the students and the middle class.

4. The meeting was a follow-up of a meeting three months ago with Cardinal Sin in which Benigno explained his concept of a Freedom Force as a buffer group to prevent a power seizure by the Left or the Right if a "social explosion" took place. Benigno, plus the two other witnesses, described the meeting as a continuing forum at which the apparent descent of Philippine society into a breakdown was being assessed. This group views the deterioration with concern.

5. Asked whether the country is on the verge of a social explosion, Benigno said that "conditions for an explosion" had been existing for a long time, but he was not sure it would happen. A Freedom Force, composed of moderate members of society, would take shape and play a pivotal force to defend democracy, only if an explosion takes place.

6. This is the perspective—not a junta—in which the discussion with Cardinal Sin took place.

7. In his April 22 column in the Star, Benigno wrote explaining the concept which he elaborated to Cardinal Sin and which he discussed with other civic and business leaders, including Dick Romulo of the Makati Business Club. He wrote:

"I explain that when the social volcano would erupt, only People Power, the Middle Forces, can save the Philippines from the . . . revolution of the Left, and the dictatorship of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The enemy this time is not the political leadership. It is the system that has worn itself out and disgraced, and debased itself. It will have to be replaced. By whom? By a 'collective leadership' comprising the best brains, the bravest hearts, the most intrepid and educated of the Middle Forces."

Too romantic

I am afraid that Teddy's formulation is too romantic. When a social upheaval explodes like the French Revolution, the Bolshevik Revolution that installed communism in Russia and even the Gaullist intervention that saved France from collapse following the Liberation of Paris and during the Algerian war of independence, the change shook society like an earthquake and no one knew what social group would come out to dominate the reconstructuring of society.

Teddy has no putschist blood running his veins. I know he is a starry-eyed admirer of Gen. Charles de Gaulle, but the irony of French democracy is that it took a military leader cum political philosopher who rebuilt the French state and democracy from the fascism of Marshal Petain's Vichy regime that collaborated with the Nazis.

Cognac served

Even if Teddy has concepts that are too tidy to fit into patterns, to tag his "collectivity" from the center as one plotting a coup or a junta is widely way off the mark. The middle forces could even be crushed between the Left and the Right in a power struggle, given that they are better organized and are armed compared with the moderates who won two people power uprisings without shedding blood.

It is true Cardinal Sin is interested in the concept but it is not true that the Freedom Force embryo group asked his blessings for a coup project on President Macapagal. Historically, Sin has never supported juntas or coups—only people power manifestations. Sin told the group: "We should meet more often." In fact, the cardinal served the group cognac.

But what is hard to explain is that Cardinal Sin dissociated himself too quickly from the meeting with the Freedom Force group. It is as though he has touched the leprous sores of political pariahs. He said he is "committed to peace," and so is the Benigno group, except that the latter is a dreamer.

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'Those people have never been for me'

From page A1

Cojuangco said that Freedom Force was calling for reforms.

He confirmed that the group visited Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin Thursday last week at the Villa San Miguel to inform and seek the support of the prelate for its planned manifesto.

Copa secretary general Pastor Saycon told the INQUIRER that Philippine Star columnist Teodoro Benigno, Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza, Cesar Sarino, Vincent Pacheco, Nick Locsin, Joan Orendain, Cojuangco and himself were present at the meeting.

Saycon told the INQUIRER of the Copa's fears that "adventurist forces" might take advantage of the prevailing "social upheaval" to replace the administration with a military junta.

He said Freedom Force was supposed to release in June a manifesto containing its reason for being and proposals.

"The manifesto would be all about democracy, freedom from poverty. That's why we wanted the Cardinal's blessing," he said.

Saycon said that the day after the meeting, he personally told Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo about what had transpired to avoid any misinterpretation.

"The President was told about Freedom Force and she knows that it's not about any junta," Saycon said.

Cojuangco also denied that Freedom Force was instigating a junta to replace the administration, as a highly placed source had told the INQUIRER. ***(Story on Page A1)***

"This is not a group against Gloria," he said. "Frankly, in the two meetings that I attended, there were never any statements saying 'Down with Gloria.' We just want to do what we can to help the administration solve some of the problems."

Saycon, Fianza and Benigno also denied that Freedom Force was engaged in forming a junta.

Bishop Socrates Villegas has yet to issue an official statement despite repeated calls from the INQUIRER.

"Copa is here to protect the government," Saycon told the INQUIRER. "We've been fighting for democracy and good government. Now why would we go to the opposite side?"

Saycon said Freedom Force was a "legitimate brainchild" of Benigno's that was intended to help the President address "the many problems of the country today."

"It's never about a junta," Saycon said. "It's meant to strengthen the government against adventurist forces that may be planning to destabilize it."

'Outrageous'

Benigno, who wrote in his column Monday that Sin had expressed full support for Freedom Force and its idea of "collective leadership," described the INQUIRER report as an "outrageous fiction."

In a live interview on GMA-7's "Saksi," Benigno denied that his group was planning to unseat the President.

"I couldn't imagine how such an outrageous fiction could occur in journalism today," he said.

To news anchor Vicky Morales' question of whether everything said in the INQUIRER report was not true, he replied: "*Hindi tutoo* (Not true)."

According to Benigno, "Freedom Force is a concept until now—it has not been realized."

He said he had thought of establishing such a group because "*magulung-magulo ang pulitika sa Pilipinas* (Philippine politics is so bad), maybe we need a third force."

Asked by news anchor Mike Enriquez if the group had asked anybody in the military to join them at their meetings, Benigno said: "Absolutely nobody in an organizational manner."

He said Fianza had attended the meeting with Sin "as an individual, not a member of the military."

In a letter to Benigno dated April 22, Sin wrote in part: "I am not in favor of the 'collective leadership' that you were talking about."

The cardinal also wrote that while he had always been for reform, "I cannot support the proposed 'collective leadership.'"

Just listening

Fianza admitted that he had witnessed Sin and Benigno talk about the Philippine political situation.

"I was there and I was listening," he said yesterday in a radio interview. "I never spoke a word. I was there with other people so I heard the discussion."

Fianza stressed that Freedom Force was merely an idea that Benigno was espousing, and that it would pose no threat to the government.

He said there was no mention of putting up a junta to replace the administration.

"If there were a suggestion for a military junta, I would have been the first one to object because I am loyal to this government," he said. "That's why I was there on May 1 (last) year defending Malacañang."

Not funny

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes dismissed the Copa's claim, as divulged Monday by a highly placed source, that 19 generals were supporting the proposed junta.

"That's another joke. I don't even find it funny," he told reporters before the start of the Cabinet meeting held yesterday in Malolos, Bulacan.

Reyes said that there was "nothing to worry about," and that "this junta—civilian, military, or whatever—is only a product of their fertile imagination."

He also said he would not bother talking with Copa leaders as he saw no reason to do so.

Reyes declared that he was sure of the top brass' support for the President.

He said there was no need for a loyalty check "because they're all loyal."

Reminded by a reporter that he also made the same assurance to then President Joseph Estrada before he led the rest of the top brass in withdrawing support from the latter, Reyes replied: "Yes, so? Well, the (Armed Forces) remains loyal to its mandate and to what it's supposed to do."

Cojuangco, the powerful secretary general of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino when his sister was President, said it was not true that the Copa was organizing a junta and had enlisted 19 generals to its cause.

"*Kalokohan yung magbanggit ng* 19 generals. Who would be crazy to announce (the formation of a junta)?" he said.

Cojuangco said Benigno "initiated" and named Freedom Force last February. But it has nothing to do with the Copa, and other Copa members are not members of Freedom Force, he said.

He described Freedom Force as "more of an information campaign to make the people aware of what's going on."

"We are afraid that extremists might take advantage of the situation," he said. "So it's just a move to make people aware because so many sectors have been asking what we can do about the situation."

Asked about the group's assessment of the administration, Cojuangco said: "It's what we read in the news—the economy is going down, there is so much unemployment, and we have the problem in Mindanao and with the New People's Army.

"And one more thing, if we don't correct the situation in Mindanao, where will that lead to?"

Feeling their way

Asked if the group was not satisfied with the President's governance, Cojuangco replied: "It is not satisfied with existing conditions."

Referring to the President's advisers and officials, he said: "*Siguro nangangapa din sila* (They're probably also feeling their way)."

Cojuangco said the group was for Ms Macapagal finishing her term in 2004. But when asked if the group would support her reelection bid, he said: "That I cannot say. *Malayo pa* (That's still far off). And are we sure that there will be elections in 2004?"

He said Freedom Force would enlist supporters nationwide and would conduct seminars and forums to inform the people of what's going on in the country.

He also said many personalities had signified support for the group.

Cojuangco confirmed that the group visited the influential cardinal on Thursday last week to show him a draft manifesto and to ask for his signature.

He said it was not true that the group had sought Sin's blessings for the formation of a junta.

"How can that be when we merely told the cardinal that we will publish a manifesto? Somebody is making this up," he said.

Cojuangco also said the cardinal asked for a final copy of the manifesto so he could present it to the council of bishops.

Fishy

But despite all the clarifications, lawmakers demanded a closer look at the matter.

Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez said: "I think a wider investigation is needed here because I have been hearing stories about these plots for some time. There's something fishy here."

Gonzalez also said the President should distance herself from the Copa.

"It is strange that some Copa members are appointees to government positions who, tongue in cheek, pledge allegiance to the President but behind her back plot against her," he noted.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles noted that as an ally of the President, the Copa had "the right to criticize her administration but certainly not to undermine her efforts." Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama, chief of staff of Ms Macapagal when she was Vice President, joked that what really transpired was not a junta plot but "*junta-han* (banter)."

Villarama said he could vouch for Fianza, who, like himself, was part of the "core group" of the GMA for President movement in 1997.

He added: "The problem with Boy Saycon, who kept a very high profile during the ouster of President Erap, is that people perceive him to be eternally plotting against the government." Sen. Aquilino Pimentel said the alleged plot was tantamount to inciting to rebellion and must not be taken lightly by the government.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson urged the President to investigate and identify those involved in the supposed plot to oust her, including the reported 19 generals.

Lacson also challenged Sin to reveal the alleged mastermind of the supposed plot.

But Sen. Ramon Magsaysay said the supposed junta plot might not be true because it was "advertised" in the media. ***Reports from Juliet L. Javellana, Christian V. Esguerra, Martin P. Marfil, Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Cynthia D. Balana, Stella O. Gonzales***

How the Inquirer got 'junta' story

From page A1

names and numbers to call to confirm the story.

The INQUIRER also tried to reach Saycon and Benigno. But only Saycon made a return call around 10:30 p.m. Monday. He confirmed that there was indeed such a meeting with the cardinal, but he denied that a junta was ever discussed.

The INQUIRER regrets that a quote about a junta was attributed to Bishop Socrates Villegas. The INQUIRER apologizes to Bishop Villegas.

It was not Villegas who talked to the INQUIRER about the junta but Limcaoco.

At that meeting, Limcaoco told the INQUIRER that his informant said the group asked the cardinal to support a "Freedom Force" that was espousing "collective leadership."

Asked by the INQUIRER what collective leadership meant, Limcaoco said: "I suspect that this collective leadership might be construed by some quarters as some form of a junta, which is disturbing."

"Of course," Limcaoco added, "the cardinal would not support any move that would espouse violence, and the cardinal made that clear in his (April 22) letter to Benigno."

Limcaoco quoted Church officials as telling him that the cardinal was "compelled to set the record straight by coming out with a letter."

According to Limcaoco, the letter was in reaction to Benigno's claim in his Monday column at the Philippine Star that the cardinal had given his blessings to the group that was espousing collective leadership.

"The tenor of Teddy Benigno's column prompted the cardinal to come out with a denial," Limcaoco said.

He pointed out that "it may not have been explicitly defined, but 'collective leadership' may be alluding to a type of junta."

"After learning about Benigno's claim, the cardinal felt so compelled to issue the denial," Limcaoco said. "The cardinal even said it twice in the same letter—that he was rejecting the collective leadership."

Limcaoco said the Church officials knew he would furnish the INQUIRER a copy of Sin's letter.

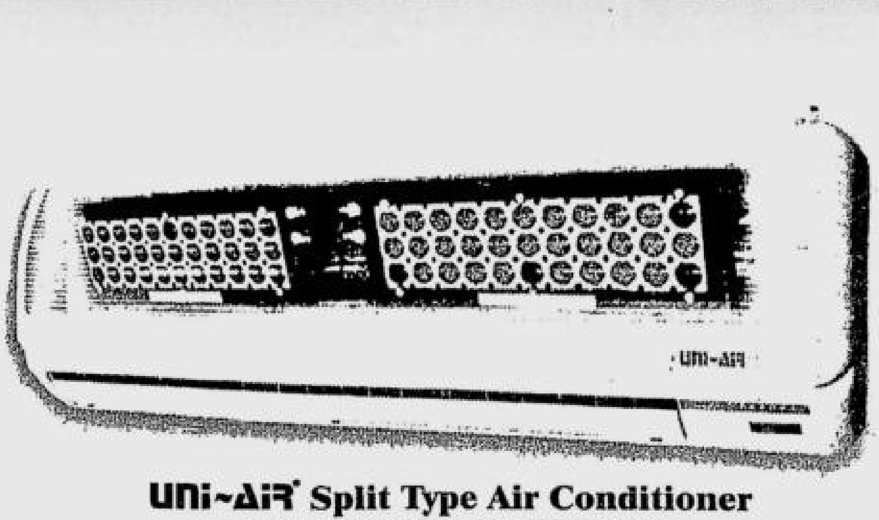
"I was authorized to release it to the INQUIRER, so I faxed you a copy," he said.

Yesterday, the PPC issued a statement supporting the cardinal "in condemning all forms of 'collective leadership' outside of the Constitution."

"We also support the stance of His Eminence against any form of violence," the PPC said.

It said it had performed "a close examination" of Benigno's column and the cardinal's letter. "This led us to uphold Cardinal Sin's rejection of the group's proposed course of action to achieve social change," it said, adding that it shared the cardinal's "support of constitutionalism" and his "sound judgment" of the "hard-working" administration of the President.

The statement also quoted Limcaoco as saying: "We would like to serve notice to any group contemplating violent and unconstitutional social change or 'collective leadership.' There is only one constitutional leader, the President of the Republic of the Philippines. We will consider such actions as a violation of the freedom of the Filipino people, and we will oppose such attempts."



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Caltex prices up anew

By R. Domingo

CALTEX Phil. raised the prices of its gasoline, diesel and kerosene products by 27 centavos per liter at noon yesterday.

This is the third time that Caltex has increased its petroleum prices within the month. It raised prices by 50 centavos per liter on April 7 and by 10 centavos on April 15.

The latest increase by Caltex followed a similar move by two other refiners, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum and Petron, over the weekend.

Marian Catedral, Caltex corporate affairs manager, said it was the company's belief that moving prices up or down often—in smaller amounts and in keeping with market forces—benefited the public more.

She said the smaller increments would not burden customers as one-shot but bigger increases would.

Catedral did not say if the company was planning another price increase within the month.

Over the weekend, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum and Petron increased pump prices by 37 centavos per liter.

This was the second price increase for the two biggest domestic oil companies. The two raised their prices by 50 centavos early this month.

Company officials said in separate interviews it would be their last price change for April.

Catedral earlier noted that a regime of price increases was also being implemented in Thailand, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

"In Thailand, prices have moved up six times since Jan. 30," Catedral said.

With the latest round of price hikes, the prices of Caltex's products have gone up by an average of P1.22 per liter since January.

The three oil majors import their crude requirements.

Average crude prices hit $22.96 per barrel in March, up by $3.94 from $19.02 in February.

The peso gained 23 centavos, from P51.29 to the dollar in February to P51.06 in March.

In a related development, the sluggish demand for oil brought down the country's net oil imports by 13.8 percent, from about $3.7 billion in 2000 to about $3.2 billion last year.

Imports of both crude and refined products declined by 2.6 percent, data from the Department of Energy show.

This means that domestic oil companies bought about 3.7 billion barrels less in 2001 than they did the year before.

The oil companies have noted a decline in oil demand last year because of the economic slowdown in the United States and Japan.

Solons want water contracts reviewed

By J. Javellana

LEGISLATORS have moved to review the 1997 privatization of Metro Manila's water distribution system in the face of plans by the two concessionaires to raise water rates yet again.

Officials of the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc., which services the west zone, and the Ayala-owned Manila Water, which operates in the east, said the next rate hike would take effect on July 1.

Two House committees—government enterprises and privatization and economic affairs—yesterday began hearings on several resolutions seeking a review of the contracts awarded to Maynilad and Manila Water.

Akbayan Partylist Rep. Etta Rosales, Quezon City Rep. Maite Defensor, Marikina Rep. Del de Guzman, Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla and Bulacan Rep. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvardo wanted to know why the concession agreements of Feb. 21, 1997 were amended.

In her resolution, Rosales said the amendment approved a provisional tariff increase of P0.02 to P0.04 per cubic meter on April 2001, which earned millions for the concessionaires.

Rosales noted a 211-percent increase in water rates between 1997 and 1998.

In five months alone, from October 2001 to March 2002, water rates rose 135 percent, said the Akbayan representative.

Defensor said there was a need to determine whether the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System failed to protect the consumers.

Ma. Teresa Pascual of the Freedom from Debt Coalition said a principal flaw in the concession agreements was the status of the MWSS regulatory office. She said the office was set up under the terms of the agreements and not as a government agency. The agency is even funded by the two concessionaires.

Pascual said the flaw undermines the autonomy of the MWSS, which decides on petitions for rate increases.

Defensor said a study should be conducted to determine whether it would be better to return water distribution back to the MWSS.

Justice Assistant Secretary Ricardo Paras said the complaints against the MWSS regulatory office were valid.

He cited a Supreme Court decision that said the promoter of an activity cannot be a regulator of that activity.

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Blood and confusion

EDITORIAL

THE TERRORISTS who planted the bomb outside a mall in General Santos City Sunday must be ecstatic. The explosion killed 14 people and wounded 69 others. Not one among those killed was a military man or a policeman or a known enemy of any armed group. All were civilians going about their business or going shopping or just looking for some relief from the oppressive summer heat in the cool confines of the mall.

Four were children, ages 4 to 7—quite enough to satisfy the lust for innocent blood of any murderer, though maybe not the General Santos bombers, whose self-styled spokesperson warned that Sunday's bloodbath was but a warm-up and more mayhem was yet to come.

As an added bonus, the bombers must have had some fun watching Malacañang all shaken up and thrown into confusion. First, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced on Monday morning that she might declare a state of emergency not only in General Santos but also in the whole of South Cotabato and two neighboring provinces. At around 2 o'clock that afternoon, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told the media the President was going ahead with the proclamation of a state of emergency in General Santos upon the recommendation of the Cabinet Oversight Committee. Two hours later, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable told a press briefing no such recommendation was approved by the committee and no extraordinary measures, like the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, were being planned. Instead, the President directed the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to beef up their forces in the area and launch an "intensified crackdown on all terrorist suspects." And she pledged that "this evil will not go unpunished."

But whom will the government punish? The police and military are not too sure about the identities of the bombers. Hours after the bombing, the police arrested two suspects who, witnesses said, had left a package inside a tricycle where the explosion came from. The PNP chief for Central Mindanao, Supt. Bartolome Baluyot, said the two were members of a group that was identified with the Moro National Liberation Front. Yesterday, PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina said the suspects were members of an MNLF "lost command" who had trained in bomb-making in Malaysia and belonged to a terrorist cell operating in the Philippines.

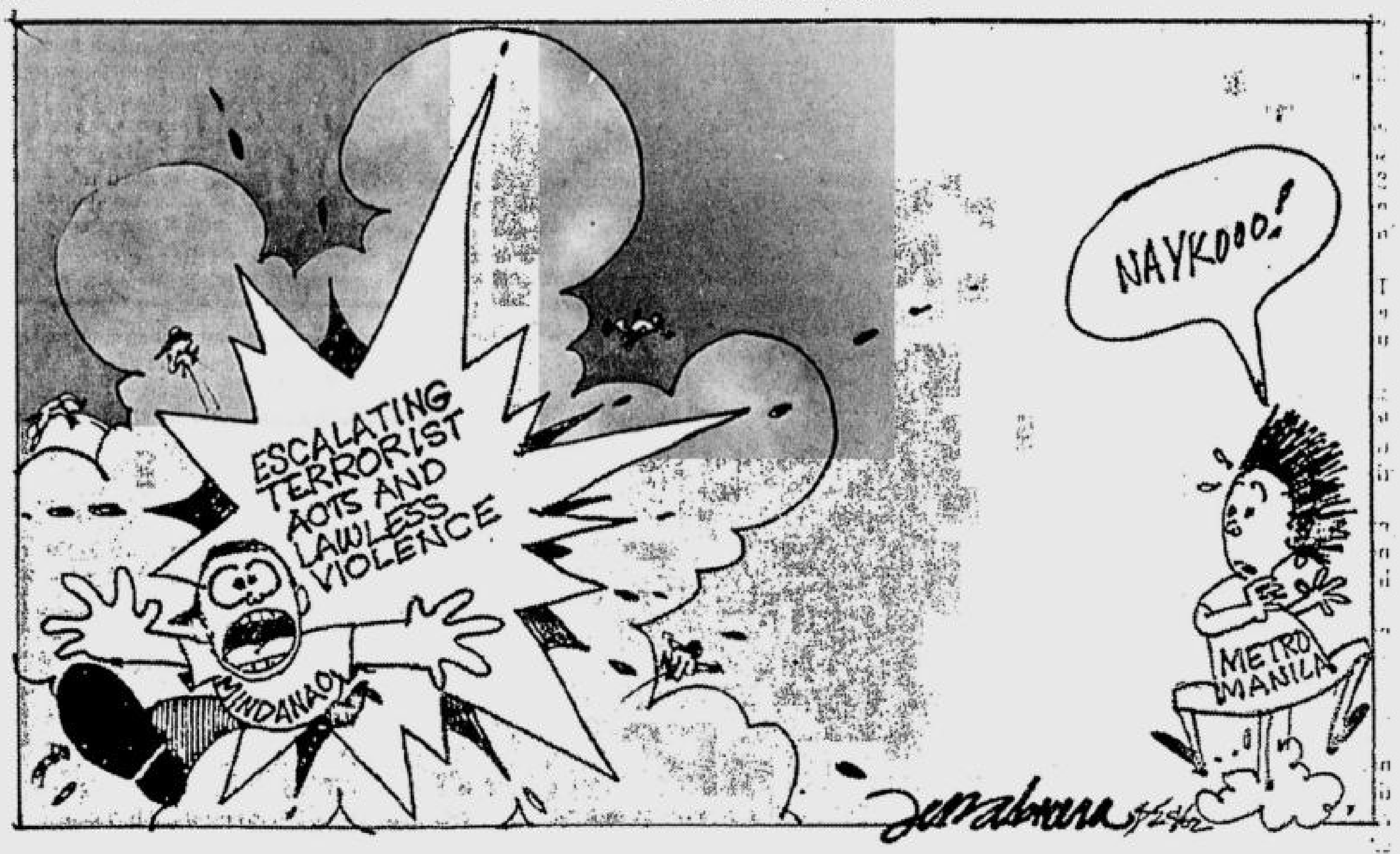
The National Bureau of Investigation has another primary suspect: the Indigenous People's Federal Army, the group that created a scare in Metro Manila last month by planting crude bombs that investigators believed to have been designed not to explode. NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the group had "expressed its willingness to detonate explosives to attract government attention to its demands."

And then there is the most obvious suspect, the Abu Sayyaf. A man who calls himself Abu Muslim Alghazie has been calling radio stations to claim responsibility for the bombing in behalf of the terrorist group that has been holding three people hostage for almost a year now. He said the group mounted the bombing "to prove that we exist" as well as in retaliation for the "atrocities committed by government forces against innocent Moro civilians in Basilan." Alghazie also proudly declared that "we are indeed terrorists," and warned that the bombing was "just a warm-up."

Many in the government apparently don't believe Alghazie is for real. Wycoco, for instance, thinks the Abu Sayyaf has no capability to mount such attacks since its forces are on the run in Basilan where thousands of government troops are pursuing it as part of their anti-terrorist training under US Special Forces. Besides, if Alghazie is for real, the next question is, what happened to the publicity-hungry Abu Sabaya?

But all this is nothing more than Monday morning quarterbacking. All such public theorizing and speculating will do little to speed up the solution of the problem. What government officials should do is put their heads and their resources together to find out the culprits and then throw everything they have to flush them out and give justice to the victims.

A feeling of "fear and helplessness" has come over the business community in General Santos, according to one businessman. That feeling can be infectious. It is bound to fill the city and maybe spread to the whole country unless the authorities produce results quickly. The terrorists are taunting the government, and it must respond decisively and forcefully before they strike again.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Lina Law has made squatting much worse

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

INTERIOR Secretary Joey Lina said in a letter to the editor last Monday that his pet law, Republic Act 7279 or the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992, but better known as the Lina Law, does not contain a provision mandating the payment of a "disturbance fee" to squatters who are to be ejected. Hurray! So why are squatters demanding payment of "disturbance fees" and why is the government paying them? (The government spends at least P100,000 for each relocated squatter family.)

Lina also said in the same letter that when he was governor of Laguna, he implemented the Lina Law and completed some 16 housing projects for 3,343 families in his province. Hurray again! But that is exactly the point of my column (As I See It, 4/16/02): that as principal author of the Lina Law, he is the best man to implement it completely and solve the squatting problem once and for all, as he had promised when he first filed the bill and defended it from criticisms.

I said that the first line of defense against squatters are the local government officials—from the barangay captain and his *kagawads*, to the mayors, councilors, provincial governors and board members—who are all under Lina as interior secretary. The Philippine National Police, who should enforce the law against squatters and arrest the violators, is also under Lina. Together, they should be able to enforce the Lina Law completely and end squatting once and for all—if the law is any good at all. But Lina, as interior secretary, has not goaded his subordinates to enforce his pet law.

On the contrary, many local officials not only tolerate squatters but actually coddle, encourage, fund and even collect *tong* from them because they mean votes when an election comes around. And some policemen (and soldiers) are even members of squatting syndicates, acting as enforcers of these groups.

The Lina Law contains a provision against squatting syndicates. Behind each squatter colony is at least one squatting syndicate, and the squatters themselves know who its members are because they collect *tong* from them. But have you heard of a squatting syndicate or a member who has been arrested and prosecuted in court? Have you heard of a barangay captain or councilor coddling squatters who has ever been charged or even just admonished? Have you heard of any government official who has been called to task by the Department of Interior and Local Government for tolerating and abetting squatting in their jurisdictions? All these officials are supervised by Lina as interior secretary but he has not supervised them in enforcing the Lina Law completely.

Instead the law is being enforced piecemeal. Only the provisions favorable to the squatters are being implemented. The rights of lot owners—who are paying the taxes used to coddle the squatters—are forgotten.

That is why I said Lina is a failure as interior secretary. I think one reason President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo chose him as interior secretary is so that his pet law can be enforced properly. But Lina has not done that. Maybe his attention is focused on other matters that take up an interior secretary's attention. So I suggested that he leave the DILG so that President Macapagal can appoint him the anti-squatting czar so that he can devote his full time to enforcing the Lina Law.

But Lina said in his letter that he is not a failure as interior secretary. On the contrary, he said he ranked fourth among fellow Cabinet members in a survey. Well, I was not among those asked to rank him by the pollsters. And those who were asked were obviously not asked to rate his performance against squatters.

Anyway, I wish Lina would be honest with the Lina Law, admit that instead of solving the squatting problem as he had expected, the law has made it much worse. Just look around. Is it because of faulty enforcement or the law itself is flawed?

If it is the latter, then Lina should be honest enough and admit that the law needs amendments, maybe draft the amendments himself and send them to a legislator. If it is the whole law that is flawed, then he should be honest enough to suggest that the law be repealed. But he cannot just sit back and do nothing and allow the squatting problem to get worse each minute.

If he truly loves his country and his President, he should try his best to end the squatting problem for all—not only for the squatters (many of whom are plain opportunists and members of squatting syndicates) but also for the much-abused taxpayers and lot owners whose properties have been taken over by squatters. These meek owners are abused not only by the squatters themselves, but ironically also by the government who keeps increasing and collecting taxes from them for the properties that the squatters are occupying and enjoying for free.

There is an unwritten contract between the taxpayer and the government to the effect that in exchange for the taxes paid, the government is supposed to provide services and protection to the life and property of the taxpayer. But while the taxpayer is compelled to fulfill his end of the bargain, the government does not. It does not protect the property of the taxpayer against squatters. Instead, it uses the taxes paid to coddle the squatters.

Secretary Lina, where is justice here?

Yes, but

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE asked me in an out-of-town trip recently why I hadn't written about the proposal to amend the Constitution. I told him the reason was that I was two minds about it.

I don't particularly care about the political motives of the congressmen, or the people who have been pushing for it. Any attempt at amending the Constitution will never be free of political motives, whether it is done now or after 2004, whether it takes the form of a constitutional convention or a constitutional commission. The point is whether there's an urgent need for it or not.

The proposal's appeal rests on three things. The first is the parliamentary system, the second is federalism and the third is voting for senators by regions rather than at large.

The argument for a parliamentary system is basically that it makes government far less of a circus. It brings back sanity to elections, which have been the province lately of movie stars, basketball players and TV personalities. Since a prime minister is elected by his peers and not directly by the voters, the specter of another Erap, whose claim to power rests solely on popularity, is lessened, if not dispelled altogether. A prime minister is likely to be, if not the best and brightest of the legislators, at least not their worst and dumbest.

The argument for the federal system, which Sen. Nene Pimentel and Cebu's leaders have been particularly pushing for, is that it will realize local autonomy. It will allow local governments to pass their own laws, collect their own taxes, run their own police forces, and so on. It will lessen the local areas' dependence on the national government, and bring talented and dynamic leaders to emerge there. More importantly, it should lessen, if not stop, the exodus of people from the provinces to Metro Manila. Who knows? It may even drive Metro Manila residents to the provinces.

And the argument for voting for senators by regions instead of at large is that it is cheaper and gives more balanced or proportional representation to various parts of the country, which should benefit the Muslims and other minorities. Of course if you have a parliamentary system, you won't need to do this. You'll just vote for representatives to a unicameral national assembly or parliament.

All this is well and good, but only on paper. The parliamentary system may curb the influx of entertainers into politics, but it opens up other unsavory prospects as well.

At the very least, if the never-ending upheavals in the Senate and the House over who should be the Senate president and Speaker are anything to go by, we should have a government that is constantly ground to a halt by petty bickering. A prime minister exists on the sufferance of those who voted for him. He can be removed at will by a vote of no-confidence. Can you imagine what that will do to us? People are already complaining that we remove presidents far too often with "people power." At least "people power" is a perfectly legitimate expression of grievance, and is, as I keep arguing, the hardest thing in the world to stir up, contrary to rumor. Not so the Senate and House coups, accomplished or frustrated. We turn parliamentary, and we could have as many prime ministers in a year as our legislators have facial massages.

I'm all for local autonomy, but I don't know that federalism is the best strategy for it. That, quite incidentally, was a major debate among American officials at the start of their rule, whether to impose a federal or centralized form of government on these islands. Federalism lost by the narrowest of margins. The argument then was that it would be easier to pacify (a benign word in light of the mayhem that accompanied it) the country with centralism. I myself would like to see an end to the "rule of imperial Manila," as the Osmeñas and people from Mindanao like to put it, but that can be accomplished in ways other than federalism.

Indeed, it can be accomplished in ways other than a constitutional change. By legislation, by executive orders, by judicial rulings. Even now we do not lack for ways to decentralize government and strengthen local governments. By allowing them to retain most of their local taxes, to begin with. But the obverse, which is demanding the highest levels of accountability from local governments, is just as important in strengthening local governments as giving them power. With power comes responsibility.

To this day, I cannot understand why Wahid Akbar for one has not gotten any censure for the spread of the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan. That's his turf. Surely any deterioration in peace and order, particularly of that epic scale, must reflect on the governor? Indeed, I cannot understand why, instead of being censured, Akbar is being rewarded with a bonanza beyond his wildest dreams. That can't argue well for local autonomy.

As to voting senators by regions rather than at large, that can always be a plebiscite item tacked on to the next elections. You don't need to hold a separate convention or constitutional commission for that.

But far more importantly, we may want to pause to consider one thing before we embark on constitutional change. Which is what we're doing, changing constitutions when we can't seem to enforce them anyway. The Constitution stipulates clear limits on visiting forces, but we don't follow it anyway. The Constitution stipulates strict observance of human rights (its framers were big on it), but we don't follow it anyway. The Constitution mandates that we make education our No. 1 priority, but we don't follow it anyway. We can't put one Constitution to work, what makes us think we can another?

But that's another story, or column.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Time for Burma's generals to bite the bullet

NEWS ANALYSIS

Andrew Marshall

BANGKOK—It's crunch time for Burma's ruling generals.

A visit by UN Special Envoy Razali Ismail this week could be the last chance for the military to show it is serious about political change in the impoverished and isolated country.

Diplomats says patience with the military rulers is running out after more than 18 months of secretive talks with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and unless it can prove the dialogue is more than just a sham, heavier sanctions are set to follow.

If Razali, who is due to arrive in Burma on Tuesday, fails to find signs that concrete progress is being made in the talks, the process could well unravel.

"This is probably the biggest test he has had," said a senior Western diplomat in Rangoon. "If he leaves Burma at the end of this visit with nothing, then it could be all over. People can't keep giving the government the benefit of the doubt forever."

Top of the international community's demands is the release of 56-year-old Suu Kyi, winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, who has been held under house arrest for 18 months.

"Releasing her is the one thing they could do now that would give them some breathing space and keep the talks on track," the diplomat said. "They can't carry on claiming to be building democracy while Suu Kyi is in confinement."

The talks between Suu Kyi and the junta were hailed by the international community as a breakthrough. Since they began, the government has released more than 200 political prisoners and ended its criticism of Suu Kyi in state media.

But more than 1,000 political prisoners are still in jail, and the government has been silent on what progress the talks have made—if any.

Suu Kyi, too, is silent. Her telephone line is cut, she cannot leave her house and her visitors are screened by the military and limited to a handful of diplomats.

Activists in Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD), which won Burma's last election in 1990 but was never allowed to take power, are increasingly restless over the lack of progress. So too are the country's many ethnic parties, who fear they could be left out of any political settlement.

Razali himself has said progress in the talks has been too slow. The credibility of the dialogue is now on the line.

"The question is how many more times can Razali keep going back if there has been no progress? If the government is playing a game, it can't do it forever," said Aung Zaw, editor of the Thai-based Irrawaddy magazine which focuses on Burma.

Diplomats say Razali may resign if this trip yields no progress. That would probably lead to stricter sanctions by the United States, Europe and Japan, pushing Burma's tottering economy even deeper into crisis.

"More sanctions would be the next step," the diplomat said. "There has been a carrot-and-stick approach so far, but if there is no progress then we will throw away the carrot."

The omens are not good ahead of Razali's trip.

The military said last month it had foiled a coup bid by relatives and cronies of elderly former dictator Ne Win. His son-in-law and three grandsons were arrested and are to be put on trial for high treason, which carries the death penalty.

Many in Burma welcomed the arrests—Ne Win began decades of dictatorial military rule in Burma when he seized power in 1962, and presided over the country's decline from being one of Asia's richest countries to one of its most backward.

But many analysts doubt a coup was ever seriously planned, and say the allegations are being used by the military to purge its ranks. They say the purge has strengthened the hand of hardliners opposed to making any concessions to Suu Kyi.

Razali's latest visit was initially scheduled for last month, but the junta asked him to postpone it at the last minute, fuelling fears about the future of the dialogue with Suu Kyi.

The government at first said it had requested the delay because the deputy foreign minister had suffered a heart attack, but then said it was too busy dealing with the alleged coup plot to meet Razali.

"It was certainly worrying that the visit was postponed," the diplomat said. "If the military is trying to stall his arrival, it means they have no good news to tell about the talks. And that means the whole process is probably in real danger."

Reuters

Sex, life and e-mail

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT SEEMS I owe the Chinese people an apology. In the column on the global survey on "Love and Lust," I mentioned, in an attempt at humor, that "no wonder there are five billion" Chinese, since the survey reported that more Chinese, among all nationalities, admitted to having had sex with more than one person at the same time.

Juhan Jin, writing from Shanghai, says "if I'm not mistaken, mainland China's population is at 1.3 billion (not 5 billion). World population is close to 6 billion." Sorry about that. "Being a Chinese myself," adds Juhan, "I sometimes get offended by jokes about Chinese people's so-called 'lust for sex.' However, I must admit that you're right to some extent.

"If you like Chinese history, it's full of stories proving the Lust and Love survey as regards to Chinese people's appetite for multiple sex partners. Having concubines is a symbol of power that was somewhat socially accepted. This resulted in orgies (that) women were forced to go through to ensure (their) 'survival.'

"But in modern times, I could safely say that this facet of the Chinese people has become less flagrant."

Well, thank you, Juhan, for the information and insight. And the next time I try to crack a joke at another nation's expense, I'll get my facts right first.

* * *

THE COLUMNS on emergency contraception and the banning by the Bureau of Food and Drugs of Postinor, the brand-name of a high-dosage contraceptive pill, have stirred heated reactions, though not the ones I had hoped for from the BFAD and the Department of Health, and women's organizations.

Meg Francisco of the Alliance for the Family, writes that they were "disheartened" by these columns. "No one is playing games with women's lives here," she says. "We in the Alliance for the Family organization were delighted to learn about the BFAD order because we're concerned about life—the life of the innocent unborn children.

"Let's not raise the dispute over whether life begins upon fertilization or implantation. That sounds as if we are denying the possibility that there is indeed a baby growing in the womb of a pregnant mother. If a woman knew that by taking Postinor, she could kill her baby, would she still claim her right to, as Ms David put it, 'decide for herself if...she is to have sex and get pregnant?'"

But Meg, the question of whether life is conceived upon fertilization, or pregnancy begins only after successful implantation IS at the heart of the issues raised regarding the de-listing of Postinor. It's your and other groups' contention that Postinor is abortifacient because it doesn't allow the fertilized ovum to be implanted. Other groups, including many doctors, posit that if there is no implantation, there is no pregnancy, and thereby no abortion has taken place.

A major reason I wrote the columns on Postinor was the decidedly undemocratic and non-transparent manner by which the BFAD and the DOH de-listed the drug without consulting all the stakeholders, especially the women who needed it most. I find it appalling that a drug that was initially allowed in to meet the needs of women who have been raped, battered, sexually assaulted or coerced into unprotected sex—women in other words who had no choice in their getting pregnant—would be withdrawn without asking these women what they thought. Regardless of where you stand on the "where does life begin" debate, the manner by which this decision was reached should be denounced as a violation of a basic principle of accountability and consultation.

* * *

ON THE OTHER hand, Machel Malay wanted to know if I had heard about the emergency contraception Website. "It's a very comprehensive Website with loads of vital information on the use of oral emergency contraceptive pills available in most countries around the world (including the Philippines)," she writes.

Machel's directions: Go to: www. ec.princeton. edu, and click on the "frequently asked questions" link. "I'm not sure whether the information on the brands of emergency contraceptives available in the Philippines is still up to date, though—perhaps you could check and let the people maintaining the Website know of any corrections you may have." I'll do that, Machel, as soon as I have a block of uninterrupted time to surf the Net, but thanks for the tip.

"Better yet," adds Machel, "why not publish a how-to guide to emergency contraception in the INQUIRER? I'm sure it would make a lot of people very, very angry, but the establishment needs shaking up, don't you agree? He-he."

Let me sleep on that, Machel, and I'll get back to you.

* * *

***MARAMING salamat* to all the e-mail junkies out there who took time to respond to "Confessions of an e-mail junkie." Some of you even went out of your way to recommend other ISPs and pre-paid services, and alternate services like cable, even sharing detailed information on how to configure my program, or access existing programs.**

I have a confession to make: Most of your instructions were just too complicated for my old-media mind to grasp. But I'm sharing your messages with my teen-ager and we'll figure out a solution. But thank you, all for the time and concern, or just the opportunity to share tales of your own addiction.

Just to acknowledge some correspondents: Alex Pascua, Cesar Chuatico, Chill de Corps, George Bodegon, Giselle, Grace Uy, Ina, jun m, Marie Jakosalem, Mykee, Ronnie Sebolino and Steve. It seems that e-mail, like chatting, is really addictive and must soon be curbed like another controlled substances—NOT! As one of my correspondents remarked, he's not ready yet to join E-mailers Anonymous!

* * *

Comments to rjdavid@inquirer.com.ph

Comparative wages and food costs

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

PEOPLE often ask me what triggered my career as a historian. I am sure it was not genetic because my father is a consulting engineer and my mother a businesswoman. Furthermore, I come from a clan of jewelers and appliance dealers, so what was it in my childhood that made me follow the path of Clio? My fascination with the past began one day when my grandparents told us about life before World War II. From their reminiscences their world seemed so different from that I was growing up in. I cannot recall the details of that story-telling session, but I do remember the surprise when given food prices in their day. My father stepped in and told us that his allowance—*baon*—was a fraction of one centavo, a *kusing*, that bought him a hearty *merienda* at school. Today, we will not even accept change smaller than a peso because it is almost worthless.

When I tell my nieces about my allowance when I was in school, they look at me as if I were a dinosaur. I tell them how much their grandparents and parents spent and they stare in disbelief. These thoughts made me dig up a list of labor and wages in Gilda Cordero-Fernando's landmark book "Turn of the Century," if only to compare current salary levels with that from 1902 and 1898. The list is alphabetical and runs from accountants to butchers, bakers and candlestick makers. The list ends with tinsmiths and umbrella makers and weavers.

A century ago, in 1902, the workers with the highest daily pay were band musicians, P5; blacksmiths (foremen), boat builders (foremen), cabinetmakers, candle makers (foremen), carriage blacksmiths and draftsmen received P4 daily. The difference between the foremen and ordinary workers in boat building was P4 for foremen, P1.50 for workers. For candle-making, foremen got P4 daily, workers P1.50.

Lowest wages went to seamstresses, 0.40 centavos, then laundrymen, 0.50 centavos (note: these were men, not laundrywomen!). Laundrymen who were foremen got a bit more, 0.80 centavos. The same as day laborers and hat makers. People who received a peso a day were bookbinders, brick makers, brick masons, horseshoers, pottery makers, printing office foremen, rope makers, shirt makers, stone cutters, stone masons, tin smiths and trunk makers. One looks at the list and he can see certain types of jobs that are not common these days: soap makers, chocolate makers, cigarette rollers, cigar box makers, cigar box fillers and horseshoe makers. Even the Chinese who went around with a small tin (or silver) scoop to free you of ear wax, the price: one or two centavos.

There were also some types of labor that were paid monthly instead of daily. The highest paid were iron foundry foremen at P250, followed by dressmakers, P200; steamboat engineers, P150; stationery engineers, P125; and teachers, P120. The lowest monthly pay went to house servants, P15. Just going over this list of labor and wages makes one wonder how it was possible to have such a low cost of living.

Imagine, a business lunch in those days in the top hotels costs P1, and if you were not too picky and went to roadside *carinderias*, you could have your fill for four centavos. Unbelievable.

"Turn of the Century" also has a table of prices of food in 1881 from a travel guide by a certain Juan P. Gutierrez Gay that lists: Beef and fish costing P 0.12 per pound. Pork was slightly cheaper at P0.10/lb. Beef and lamb were imported from Australia either live or dressed and delivered by refrigerator ships. Ducks cost P1 each, goose cost double at P2. Pigeon was P0.18 each. Regular size turkey, P2.50. Various vegetables averaged to about three centavos per pound. White refined sugar, 7 centavos per pound and brown sugar, 6 centavos. Eggs, 25 centavos per dozen, roughly 2 centavos each. Ground coffee at 37 centavos was cheaper than chocolate with cinnamon at 50 centavos a pound.

At the turn of the century, Joseph Earle Stevens, who left a very amusing memoir of his brief stay in Manila, said that, "For 40 US cents a day (80 centavos) [my] cook could supply an entire dinner for four people and for five cents extra [can] decorate the tablecloth with orchids and put peas in the soup." Another American, Hugo H. Miller, gives the prices of transporting 100 kilos for one kilometer: *cargadores* charged 50 centavos if the roads were good and 60 centavos if the roads were bad. Carabao black cost 15 centavos over good roads, 17 centavos over bad roads. A cart would charge 4 centavos over good roads, 17 over bad roads. If there was no road, you hired a sled and bed, 15 centavos.

When old people today complain that Manila has become hot, you think of the greenhouse effect. Conservationists will blame poor urban planning that has consistently shown a preference for concrete instead of grass and trees in large open spaces. Maybe it is true that the Philippines was so much cooler 50 years ago than it is today. Just looking at old photographs of civil servants in their coats, ties and hats, you do wonder how they survived with only an *abanico* for air-conditioning. The world has changed indeed—for better or worse depends on the way you look at it.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Joseph Estrada and Hugo Chavez

COMMENTARY

Rodolfo A. Arizala

FOR THE PAST several weeks, the eyes and ears of the world have been focused on Argentina where within a week's time three presidents came and went, after Fernando de la Rua resigned due to mounting demonstrations against his regime and in the light of serious and social problems facing the country.

Subsequently, the attention of the world shifted to another Latin American country—this time Venezuela, where a duly elected president was ousted by people power with the aid of the military. Within barely 48 hours, the presidency of this country changed hands four times.

In the light of recent developments in Venezuela and the people power transition in the Philippines (Edsa II) where a duly elected president was also ousted by people power with the tacit approval of the armed forces, it is relevant to make comparisons between the two—Caracas people power and Manila people power.

What happened recently in Venezuela could be briefly summarized as follows:

First, Hugo Chavez, a duly elected president was ousted by people power (mostly from the upper middle-class sectors of society) with the help of some military elements. A businessman, Pedro Carmona, was installed acting president. One of his immediate acts was to abolish Congress. This act did not sit well with the military which helped him come to power. Meanwhile, there was a counter-demonstration held by the *masa* followers of Chavez coming mostly from the poor Western part of the City of Caracas called Villa Miseria. The Eastern part of the city is where the elite or the rich, businessmen and high society live. They were the ones who supported Carmona. Due to his weakening support from the military and in the face of the counter-demonstration held by the pro-Chavez group, Carmona hurriedly reconvened Congress which he had dissolved earlier. Once Congress was convened, most members persuaded Carmona to resign and in his place, Vice President Cabello was installed as acting president. While this was happening, ousted President Chavez was being rescued by his followers from an island (Isla Orchila) where the military kept him confined. Upon his arrival in the capital, Chavez was installed again as president of Venezuela. Thus, within 48 hours, Venezuela went through four changes in the presidency of the country.

How do we compare the People Power II (ouster of President Joseph Estrada) with the Caracas people power (ouster of President Chavez)? The following points may be observed:

1. Chavez did not sign any resignation paper or make gestures that he was resigning his post as president, while in the case of Estrada he reportedly resigned or made overt acts that he was resigning as president.

2. Chavez did not go home but was brought by the military to a military base as captive in an island called La Orchila, thus, appearing to the international community and to his followers to be a duly elected president who was being held "prisoner."

3. Carmona did not take his oath of office as president but as acting president giving the impression that a president is physically absent or could not discharge his duties temporarily. In the case of Edsa II, Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took her oath of office as president of the Philippines until the next presidential election.

4. Chavez did not lose support from the military and from the civilian population. Estrada lost support from the military although he retained some support from his followers and members of the *masa*.

5. Regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Rio Group made signals that they would not recognize the interim government of Carmona because of the manner he gained office which altered the constitutional order of Venezuela. In the case of Estrada no regional organization made a stand declaring that there was an interruption of constitutional process in the Philippines.

6. In the case of Carmona, no institution "legitimized" his being installed as acting president, whereas the return to power of ousted President Chavez was legitimized by Congress. In the case of Estrada, it was the Supreme Court which legitimized Vice President Macapagal's oath-taking as president, thus, in effect, delegitimizing Estrada's claim to the presidency.

7. It was the East side of Caracas (the upper middle class and businessmen) as well as the military which supported Carmona while the West side poor sectors (Villa Miseria) of Caracas and some segments of the military supported Chavez's return to power as president. On the other hand, Estrada has the support of the *masa* but not of the military, and the businessmen from the elite sector.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that what happened in Caracas recently was not exactly a copy of Edsa II in 2001 when Estrada was ousted. Chavez from the island of La Orchila returned to power, like Napoleon who was able to have his second coming as leader of France escaping from the island of Elba. Estrada, for reasons stated above, was not able to return to power.

It may also be observed that the success of a counter-revolution, depends on the *masa* as well as on the military and on the public opinion of local and regional or international organizations. It may be recalled that while these events were going on in Venezuela, according to reports Argentina, Mexico and Paraguay which are members of the Rio Group and the OAS, considered the Carmona government as illegitimate while Chile, also a member of the Rio Group and the OAS, made the observation that with the ouster of Chavez, constitutional process in Venezuela has been disrupted. In other words, the Rio Group and the OAS were reluctant to deal with the Carmona government and opted to await further developments.

It may be further noted that in the case of Chavez, as ousted president, he did not go home or go in exile but was held as prisoner in an island away from the center of power or government.

Despite some differences between the people power in Caracas and Manila, there are some similarities. Among them, both ousted presidents were duly elected by the people; and that if a movement is participated in or there is a convergence of forces from the manual toilers, middle class and elite supported by the experts in the management of people and ceremonials as well as by the military, then people power is likely to succeed. As seen earlier, people power will succeed if those with skill in violence or power (the military) would either remain neutral or cooperate with the popular movement. For as political scientist Harold Lasswell wrote in his book, "Who Gets What, How, When": In a revolution or political upheaval the propaganda preparation must be successfully designed to win over or to demoralize a large fraction of the soldiery and the police. This is what happened in Edsa II as well as in Caracas recently.

Rodolfo A. Arizala is the former Philippine ambassador to Chile.

SSS contribution rate lowest in Asia

THIS is in reference to the letter of Apolonio Ramos. (PDI, 3/15/02) Ramos proposed the creation of an independent body "to study SSS finances from the administration of former President Marcos to the present administration." This is in connection with the efforts of the Social Security System to increase its contribution rate and avert a fund hemorrhage.

Please be informed that the finances of the SSS are audited in-house and by the official Commission on Audit. The SSS also submits a report on its expenditures and finances to Congress and the President every year. It contains SSS earnings, cash flow and other financial data on the institution's operations.

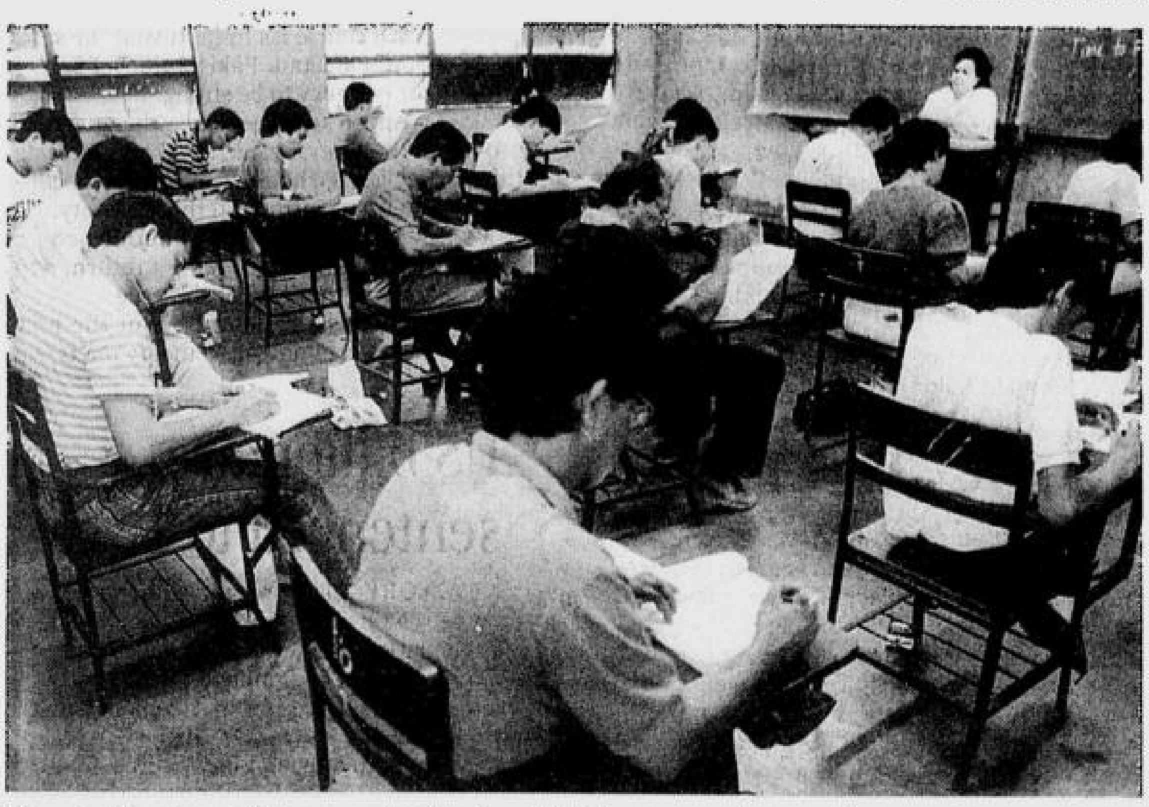
We want to emphasize that the financial condition of the SSS was caused by an imbalance between low contribution collection and high benefit payments. It was not caused by bad loans and investments, or inordinately high salaries and bonuses to employees.

The SSS charter has put a cap on its spending and investments to protect the fund. We have never violated those limits. The SSS funds are safe. As of end 2001, SSS assets have reached more than P168 billion.

There is a need to adjust the SSS contribution rate to strengthen the institution and make it more responsive to the needs of the members. We assure members that an increase in pensions would be considered as soon as the financial condition of the SSS improves.

The 8.4 percent present contribution rate of members, which was pegged in 1980, is the lowest in Asia. In comparison, the Government Service Insurance System has 21 percent; Malaysia, 23 percent; Singapore, 32 percent; China, 30 percent; Egypt, 30 percent; and Turkey, 20 percent.

—**JOEL P. PALACIOS, assistant vice president, Media Affairs Department, Social Security System, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**



Questions of propriety in UP bar review classes

I AM one of those who were fortunate to have passed the 2001 bar examinations. I am a graduate of the St. Louis University in Baguio City, and I enrolled at the UP Law Center in Quezon City for my review from April to September 2001.

A few weeks from now, review classes for the bar examinations will commence once again. I wrote this letter to give my observations regarding bar review classes.

When I reviewed at the University of the Philippines, we were informed that one of UP's professors (Prof. Samilo N. Barlongay) had taken a leave of absence and that probably he would be the examiner in Political Law. Despite this, the Law Center distributed review materials carrying his name. Then the names of the examiners were announced, and the professor was indeed the examiner in that subject.

Considering that he was being rumored to be one of the examiners, I believe it was inappropriate for the Law Center to distribute review materials that were identified to have been prepared by him.

I don't believe that the Law Center intentionally did this to market itself. After all, it is the premier law review school in the country and it did not have to resort to cheap gimmicks to attract reviewees. However, I believe that it should be more circumspect in preparing review materials to avoid any suspicion of impropriety.

Some of these materials could have been prepared for seminars conducted by the law center. In that case, shouldn't it have simply deleted the byline? Some of the handouts given to us had no byline anyway.

A friend noted that one of the handouts could have been prepared for the advanced bar review classes for the 2001 bar examinations since it was titled "Review Questions" and it included jurisprudence not covered by prior bar examinations. But I don't believe the chair of the bar examinations would have named as an examiner someone who had lectured in an advanced review class.

I would also suggest that the Law Center refrain from issuing handouts at the last minute. During our review, handouts were distributed early in the morning of the examination days. Most of us were not able to avail ourselves of these materials since we were billeted near the examination site. I see no reason why the Law Center cannot release these materials earlier. Student organizations and fraternities resort to this practice to create the impression that the materials were taken from "backdoor sources," but again the Law Center need not resort to such cheap tricks.

—**V. C. CADANGEN, Suite 402, Lyman Ogilby Centrum, 358 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City**

No Jancom listed in Sydney phone book

THIS refers to the column of Neal H. Cruz, titled "Hail to the Chief for rejecting Jancom deal." (PDI, 4/19/02)

I agree with Cruz. For really if the Jancom contract is legal, valid and perfected, why does it need the signature of the President? Why did Presidents Ramos and Estrada not sign it?

Before writing this letter, I checked the Sydney telephone directory. And there is no such company as Jancom Environmental or Waste Management. Because of this, is the Philippine government dealing with an Australian company?

There is no doubt that our environment should be protected because it is a living thing. And the best man who can protect our environment is Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez. He is not only a competent, honest and good public servant but also a walking encyclopedia on environmental matters. That is why, for the good of our country and the environment, I am appealing to all members of the Commission on Appointments to confirm the appointment of Secretary Heherson Alvarez.

—**OSCAR R. LANDICHO, Sydney, Australia, orlandicho@hotmail com**

Fort Magsaysay is in Palayan City

WITH THE RECENT events involving issues like alternative confinement for Nur Misuari and the Balikatan 01-02 war exercises between the US Armed Forces and Armed Forces of the Philippines, Fort Magsaysay was frequently mentioned as host of these concerns.

However, in all reports whether in print or in broadcast, both failed to ascertain the specific location of Fort Magsaysay. Hence, we take this opportunity to let you know that the said camp is located specifically in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija and not just in Nueva Ecija as often reported. The local government of Palayan City exercises political and territorial jurisdiction over this area since Aug. 4, 1969, the date of effectivity of Republic Act 6052 expanding the territory of Palayan City.

—**MA. LORELIE C. FAJARDO, mayor, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija**

Pros and cons of mining

THE PHILIPPINES is rich in mineral resources, resources that can't be mined because of intense opposition from various environmentalist groups who, unfortunately, seem unable to take a holistic approach. They look at only the damage done at the mine site and are unable to see all the good that responsible mining creates.

Everything in life is a trade-off. One must create a balance, weighing the good against the bad. And if the good outweighs the bad, then it can be an acceptable sacrifice.

Mining, demonstrably, generates far more good than bad if done according to the strict environmental standards that mining companies have now adopted. Quite simply, we wouldn't have today's modern world we all enjoy—and take for granted—without the resources mining produces.

Mining could bring considerable wealth to the country, and particularly to depressed rural communities where people need jobs, need to be able to feed, shelter and educate their kids properly. Mining should, in fact, be a major part of the government's anti-poverty strategy. Those who oppose mining may not be aware that the rural poor are the ones who suffer the most because of their opposition.

Responsibly run mining companies minimize damage to the environment, and put the area back into better condition than when they started. (This is a provable fact.)

I have a suggestion for them: If they really believe mining should be banned then they should stop using any product that uses minerals—otherwise they are being duplicitous. If mining is bad, then they shouldn't encourage it by using the products from mines.

This means no car, no TV; no refrigerator, no electricity (it is delivered on copper wires), no writing pens, no cell phones. And no wedding rings. The list is endless.

I challenge mining opposers to forsake all products derived from mines. Otherwise I suggest they are not true to their cause. But, better, I suggest they consider the situation more dispassionately and fairly. And agree to allow mining, but continue to push that it be done in a responsible manner.

—**PETER WALLACE, president, Wallace Business Forum, 14th Floor, Sagittarius Bldg., H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City**

Israeli checkpoints infuriate Gazans

NEWS ANALYSIS

Nidal al-Mughrabi

GAZA—When Um Khaled wants to see her grandchildren on the other side of the Gaza Strip, she faces an exhausting, day-long journey of just a few miles.

"It's as if you are traveling to another country," Um Khaled said of her visits to Gaza City from the town of Khan Younis.

Gaza has been spared the destruction and fierce fighting of Israel's West Bank offensive, but the Palestinians who live there say its checkpoints and road closures have guaranteed misery as they try to go about their daily lives.

Many cannot work because they cannot get to their jobs, food shipments have been blocked or canceled and travel, including emergency trips to hospitals, has become an ordeal.

When Um Khaled leaves Khan Younis and reaches the Israeli checkpoint, the elderly woman and all the other Palestinian travelers must abandon shared taxis and lug their baggage over a huge mound of sand and rock piled up by Israeli bulldozers.

They then face queues under the hot sun that can last for hours, before finding onward transport at an amusement park now functioning as an impromptu taxi rank.

And travelers can never be sure the checkpoint will be open, or stay open when they reach it.

"The Jews treat us like chickens," Um Khaled told Reuters. "They open the gate, close the gate. It's humiliation, my son."

Palestinians often suffer the further indignity of seeing Israeli troops stop them in their tracks to allow free passage to convoys of Jewish settlers moving to or from the 19 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

Israel tightened travel curbs and blockades in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at the start of an 18-month-old Palestinian revolt that erupted after seven years of peace talks and interim deals failed to end the occupation.

It says it needs the restrictions to protect itself from Palestinian gunmen and suicide bombers. Palestinians consider them collective punishment.

In Gaza, tanks loom over checkpoints that split the Strip—the world's most densely populated area separating Israel from Egypt—into three. Troops filter the movement of people and goods in a heavy-handed fashion that has even drawn a rare rebuke from Israel's most faithful ally, the United States.

"Israel should take immediate action to ease closures and allow peaceful people to go back to work," President George W. Bush said on April 4, urging Israel to show compassion at checkpoints and border crossings to spare "innocent Palestinians daily suffering."

Palestinians say Bush's appeal has fallen on deaf ears, with potentially dangerous results.

"More and more pressure leads to an explosion. The Israelis must understand that," said Abdel-Razek Kareem, a university student. "We are not animals, we are humans and will always fight to regain our freedom."

Palestinians not compelled to travel often choose not to run the checkpoint gauntlet, though social ties to friends and relatives may suffer in consequence.

"I do not visit my family unless it is an urgent matter or an important occasion," said Angham Halabi, who lives with her husband in northern Gaza, away from her parents in the south.

"Many times Israeli soldiers fire at random at passing vehicles," she said. "It can be a scary trip."

With 40,000 Gazans deprived of jobs inside Israel, unemployment has soared to 65 percent in the Gaza Strip, home to more than a million people, from 22 percent before the uprising began in September 2000, Labor Ministry figures show.

Many have been forced to borrow money in order to eat, when food is available.

Closures at the Karni crossing, the main link for trade between Israel and the Gaza Strip have caused food shortages, according to executives at the strip's only flour mill.

The Palestinian Flour Mills company can only produce 80 percent of Gaza's needs. The rest must come from Israel.

Board chair Ali Shaath told Reuters Israeli forces had occupied and damaged the company's premises a month ago.

"They have also reduced our working hours from 24 to only eight hours a day," he said. "This has cut daily production to 60 tons from 270 tons before their presence."

Israel denies restrictions were causing shortages of wheat, flour or other essentials. A spokesperson for its civil coordination office in Gaza said that, on last Thursday alone, 40 trucks with textiles, sugar, vegetables, fruit, wheat and flour had entered Gaza from Israel.

He said "hundreds of tons" of flour had reached Gaza since the West Bank offensive began on March 29. Palestinian security officials denied Israel had let through any such quantities.

Partly easing the problem, Israel allowed the entry into the Gaza Strip of a food convoy belonging to the UN Relief and Works Agency on Monday. It had been held up at Israel's Ashdod port.

UNRWA officials say the convoy, carrying 300 tons of lentils, 240 tons of flour and 54 tons of sunflower oil, will be distributed to refugees in eight Gaza camps.

They said 124,000 refugee families were getting emergency food aid. Distribution had previously targeted hardship cases, but Israeli closures prompted the UNRWA to broaden the handouts.

Under interim peace deals signed since 1993, Israel has the final word at all crossings linking Palestinian-ruled areas.

"It is a prison," said Ahmed Ayesh, a teacher, echoing the feelings of a million fellow Gazans.

Reuters

Different stories of different voices

ON APRIL 19, 1999 131 voices were heard for the last time as passengers of Air Philippines Flight 541 plunged to their death on a lush coconut grove in sunny and romantic Samal Island. Two years ago, after President Joseph Ejercito Estrada declared an all-out war in Mindanao, other voices must have likewise given their last cry as the guns of war resumed the perennial carnage in war-weary Mindanao. Two years ago, President Erap Estrada celebrated his birthday for the last time in Malacañang, oblivious of the coming events that were to lead to his eventual downfall.

After two years, the relatives of the victims of Air Philippines Flight 541 continue to raise their voices against the owners of Air Philippines.

After two years, there is still "war" in Mindanao.

After two years, there is no justice for the victims of the Marcoses.

After two years, there is still acting in Malacañang, as well as in a hospital.

After two years, our country continues to wallow in the pit of unpeace, un-inspiring leadership and frightful uncertainty.

Today, in 40 countries all over the world, various groups will march to the embassies of Israel to raise their voices against war, against Israel and the promoters of a global war.

Today, I join the voices of the living in their cry for peace and an end to the attack on Palestine by Israel.

Today, I join the voices of the dead, the 131 victims of Air Philippines Flight 541 crash; the disappeared, salvaged and murdered by Marcos and his minions; the hostaged, tortured and murdered victims of the Abu Sayyaf; the Americans who died in New York on Sept. 11, 2001; the Palestinians and Israeli soldiers and civilians who died fighting; and the many innocents, children, youth and women who have died in the senseless crossfire of countless, senseless wars. The voices of the dead need ours to speak their simple truth: They much prefer to speak as living and not as dead.

—**FR. ROBERTO P. REYES, Gomburza**

Strengthening the enforcement of RA 7877

THE NATIONAL Commission on the Role of Filipino Women appreciates the recent ruling of the Supreme Court on the sexual harassment case against Dr. Rico Jacutin, a former health officer of Cagayan de Oro City. The decision of the highest tribunal is now a landmark ruling on the criminal aspect of this often work-related violence against women (VAW). For us, it is an affirmation that the Supreme Court heeds the concern of women and redresses gender-based violence.

We salute the woman who bravely fought for her human right. She serves as an inspiration to the many women who encounter abuse and discrimination every day.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that women continue to suffer abuse and discrimination and do not get justice because of gender bias. Women victims of harassment and sexual abuse succumb to prejudgment and further discrimination when the blame is put on them instead of the perpetrator. Thus, the government and the women's movement continue to find ways of strengthening the implementation of Republic Act 7877 or the anti-sexual harassment law. The NCRFW and its partners from government and non-government organizations have developed manuals on handling sexual harassment cases and formation of committees on decorum, trained male managers in government and established sexual harassment desks in various government agencies and local government units.

Sexual harassment is considered as a work hazard in the Framework Plan for Women (FPW), the plan that embodies the priorities of the Macapagal administration for Filipino women. Apart from having costs to the women victims, it has costs to the economy as it hampers productivity of half the country's labor force. For this reason, the FPW aims to install mechanisms that will further the justice delivery system on VAW, provide rehabilitative and protective services to women victims and survivors of abuse and exploitation and adopt more executive and legislative measures that will eliminate gender discrimination.

—**AURORA JAVATE-DE DIOS, chair, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 1145 JP Laurel St., San Miguel, Manila**

No hidden agenda for JDV

WE believe Speaker Jose de Venecia has no hidden agenda for charter change. He is a man of valor. We also believe that he will keep his word that he will support President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 election. We think that he has no other choice since not only are they of the same party, but Ms Macapagal is also highly qualified and doing a good job right now.

A political leader who realizes his limitations is arriving at his maturity as a leader and as a statesman, and this seems to be the path De Venecia has chosen for himself. His declaration that he has no plans to seek any higher office is an indication of his character as a man of wisdom and great humility.

Let us hope that those who malign him and don't trust his word would just cease and desist already and leave him be the simply good Speaker he wants to be.

—**ISIDRO Q. ALIGADA, national chair, Global Alliance of OFWs, 4 Nerva St., VistaVerde Executive Village, Cainta, Rizal**

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Chirac fears dirty debate

PARIS—President Jacques Chirac's camp sought on Tuesday to set conditions on any TV debate with presidential rival Jean-Marie Le Pen for fear the far-rightist would use it to resurrect sleaze allegations dogging Chirac.

Le Pen, who stunned most of France by beating Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin out of second place in Sunday's first round vote, has declared he is ready to face Chirac "any time, any place" in a televised debate before the May 5 runoff.

While Jospin largely passed over allegations that Chirac was embroiled in the corruption that for decades inflicted much of French politics, Le Pen—who detests Chirac with a passion—returned to them frequently in his campaign.

"I have seen Le Pen in debates, I have seen the way he employs slander and insult more than ideas. That is the issue we must consider," said Michele Alliot-Marie of Chirac's conservative Rally for the Republic (RPR) party.

Asked on RTL radio whether Chirac's camp would prefer a discussion moderated by journalists to a straight head-to-head between the two candidates, she added:

"If the debate takes place, we must find a way to guarantee the dignity and democratic nature of this head-to-head."

The TV setpiece, which has attracted millions of viewers before past runoffs, could be key in forming voter opinions before a second round which Chirac is expected to win hands down as even left-wingers rally to his side to defeat Le Pen.

Reuters

Mystery shrouds fall of Afghan money

KABUL, Afghanistan—Dive into the crowds at the Shahzada Exchange Market and you'll hear whispers about shipping containers filled with new afghani bills.

And you'll hear whispers about enemies of the former king trying to humiliate him. And whispers about Russia and Pakistan conspiring against Afghanistan's economy.

The currency has plummeted in the last week, just when many were expecting it to rise. A week ago, the afghani was trading around 30,000 to the dollar. It peaked close to 40,000 on Sunday, retreating to about 37,000 Monday after the central bank intervened and bought afghanis.

On Monday, there was chaos at the exchange market in Kabul.

Jostling crowds of men in turbans and women in burqas milled through a courtyard where moneychangers called out prices from balconies. Men with machine guns looked down from the rooftops.

Afghanistan's former king returned from 29 years of exile on Thursday, and many people bought afghanis ahead of his arrival, expecting to see their value rise. Instead, the currency's value began dropping, and speculators now are selling afghanis at a significant loss.

"It's all related to speculators," said Abdul Samiwalli, Afghanistan's deputy finance minister.

At the Shahzada Market, many moneychangers agreed. They said people were selling afghanis they bought only last week, asking for Pakistani rupees, Iranian toman or US dollars.

But why did Afghanistan's currency drop? The moneychangers may be holding the answer in their hands.

Instead of soiled wads of ancient bills, most moneychangers are suddenly offering brand-new stacks of 10,000 afghani notes. Some have bricks of 10 million afghanis still wrapped in plastic.

"No one knows where the money came from, but if you go around the market, everybody has it," said trader Nazir Mohammed.

"It began to appear a week ago," said another trader, Ahmad Zia. "When it arrived, the value plummeted."

In a second-story currency shop, Mohammed Taher Qayumi presided over the chaos in jeans and a sports shirt, a cellphone dangling from his waist to follow the exchange rates in Pakistan and Iran.

"It's not clear who brought the money to the market, but it comes from people arriving from the Shomali Plain" just north of Kabul, he said. "The residents of that area have new money. But we cannot say who gave it to them."

Then Qayumi lowered his voice and leaned closer. "It's a political question," he said. "Everyone knows where the money came from, but I cannot tell you."

Asked whether he was referring to Russia, he threw away all attempts at secrecy.

"Of course it's from Russia!" he said. "And Pakistan. Pakistan never wants our currency to be strong."

Anwar-ul-Haq-Ahady, the governor of the central bank, speaks impeccable English and holds an MBA and a doctorate from Northwestern University. He has heard the stories about people stockpiling for the king's return, and believes they're probably true.

He has also heard about the new money, but and has a theory on its origins.

AP

Gates: Plan will cripple Microsoft

WASHINGTON—Microsoft chairperson Bill Gates, making his first court appearance in the company's antitrust battle, told a hearing Monday that a proposed remedy from a group of states would "cripple" the company.

Gates testified in the hearing before US District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, who is considering a penalty for the firm's violation of US antitrust laws.

"Microsoft would be greatly devalued as a company," Gates said in prepared testimony totaling 156 pages, adding that the plan would "require Microsoft to withdraw Windows from the marketplace."

"In short, the practical effect of the (plan) would be to cripple Microsoft as a technology company."

Gates said that aside from these concerns, it would be "extremely difficult, if not impossible in some cases," for Microsoft to comply with the plan.

The appearance in the antitrust court case was the first for the world's richest man and founder of the world's biggest software firm. At the original antitrust trial in 1998 his videotaped deposition was introduced into evidence, and analysts said his tone was not helpful to the company's defense.

On Monday, Gates said the company's market capitalization is based on the market's belief that the firm is on track to deliver "breakthrough technologies" that generate new revenues.

Gates told the court the pricing provision of the states plan—which gives discounts to slimmer versions of Windows—could possibly bring the price of Windows to nothing and cost his firm $10 billion.

AFP

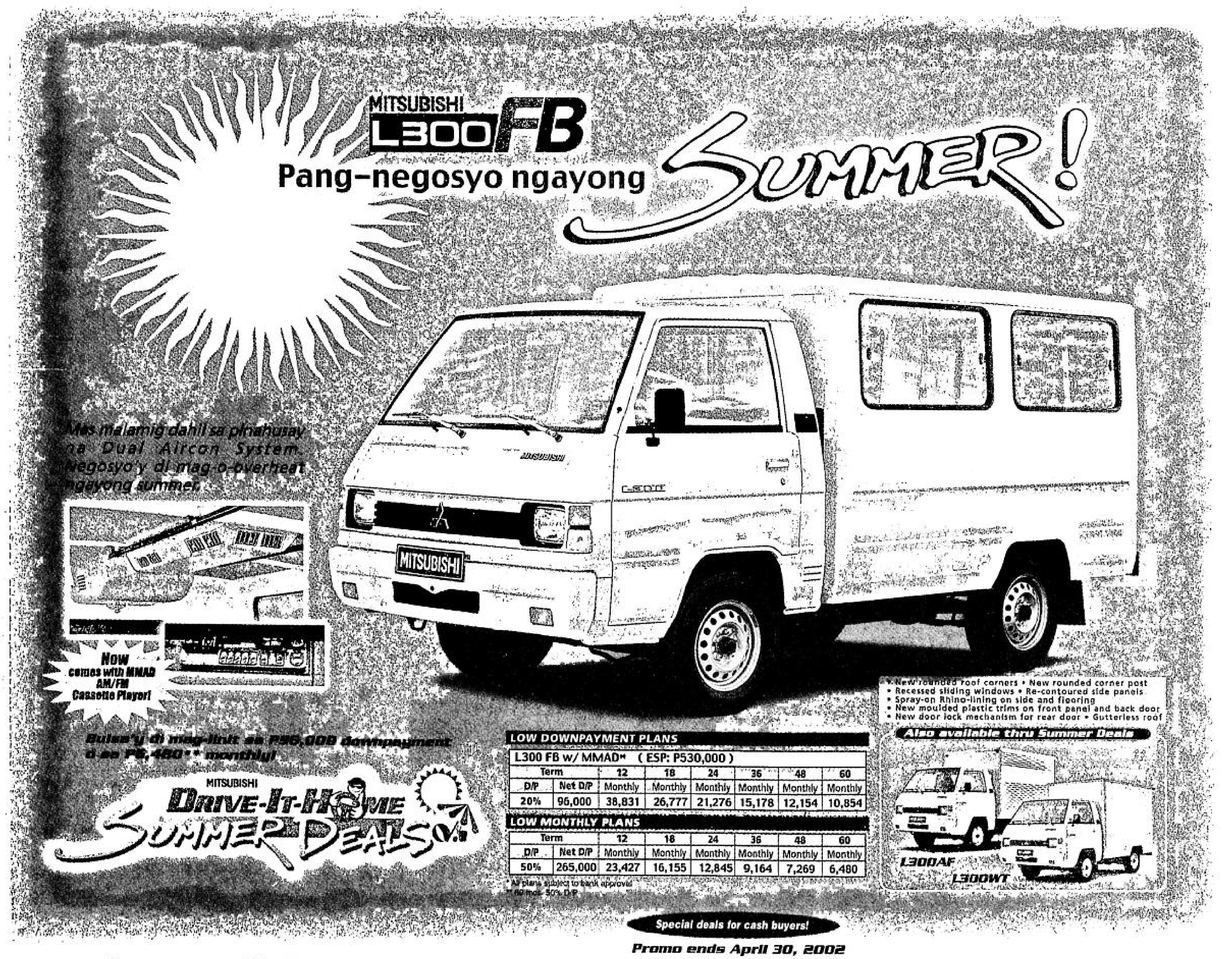
US billionaire sentenced to 1 year

NEW YORK—The former chairperson of Sotheby's auction house, US billionaire Alfred Taubman, was sentenced Monday to one year of prison and a $7.5-million fine for entering into an illegal price-fixing agreement with rival Christie's.

A Manhattan federal jury on Dec. 5 found Taubman, 76, guilty of conspiring with Christie's management to set higher commission rates charged to sellers as well as buyers.

Clients of the world's top two auction houses lost some $400 million as a result of the fraud, prosecutors claimed.

AFP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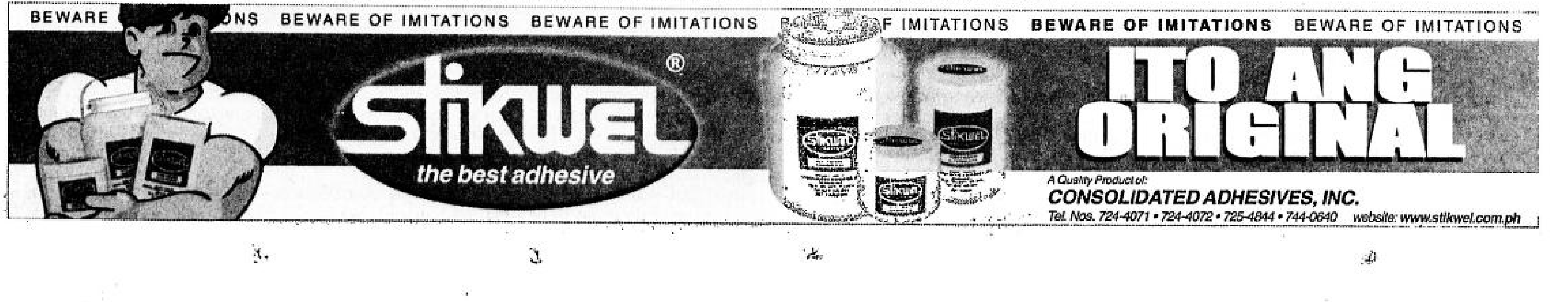
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'Deep Throat' star Linda Lovelace dies

DENVERLinda Boreman, who starred as Linda Lovelace in the 1972 pornographic film "Deep Throat" and later became an anti-porn advocate, died Monday from injuries she suffered in a car crash. She was 53.

Boreman was taken to Denver Health Medical Center with massive trauma and internal injuries after the April 3 accident, hospital spokesperson Sara Spaulding said. She was taken off life support Monday, Spaulding said.

Boreman's ex-husband, Larry Marchiano, said he and their two adult children were at the hospital when she died.

"Everyone might know her as something else, but we knew her as mom and as Linda," Marchiano said. "We divorced five years ago, but she was still my best friend."

The family moved to Colorado in 1990 and the two divorced in 1996 after 22 years of marriage.

Boreman claimed her first husband forced her into pornography at gunpoint. They divorced in 1973.

Their relationship disintegrated into a life of violence, rape, prostitution and pornography, according to her 1980 autobiography, "Ordeal" and her testimony before congressional committees investigating pornography. *AP*

Maoist strike cripples Nepal

KATMANDU—Nepal closed down on Tuesday for a five-day national strike ordered by Maoist rebels fighting to overthrow the king and government.

Streets in the normally bustling capital Katmandu were empty of traffic and silent. Those daring to leave their homes had to walk.

Businesses and schools were closed, shops shuttered and barred.

Police said there were two small bomb explosions in Katmandu on Monday night, but there no signs of trouble early on Tuesday.

Troops, carrying assault rifles and wearing camouflage uniforms, guarded the streets and occasionally checked people as they walked past.

Residents in other major cities said by telephone they had also mainly closed down for the strike.

A local journalist in Nepalgunj, a major southwestern city, said police there had forced some shops to open to try to break the strike, but no one was on the streets.

Maoist rebels, battling to replace the Himalayan kingdom's constitutional monarchy with a one-party communist state, launched a wave of intimidatory attacks ahead of the strike.

These included bomb blasts in Katmandu, one just three kilometers from the prime minister's heavily guarded official residential compound, on Sunday.

More than 3,500 people have died in the six-year rebellion, inspired by late Chinese leader Mao Zedong's campaign to give power to peasants and end the privileges of the urban elite.

On the eve of the strike, Katmandu shopkeepers said they would close down rather than risk the wrath of the Maoists.

"The Maoists might firebomb us," said one shopkeeper selling shawls and rugs just a short distance from a major tourist hotel. "If they don't bomb, they might chop me."

Said one bookshop owner: "I don't want to close, I can't afford to close. But what choice do I have?"

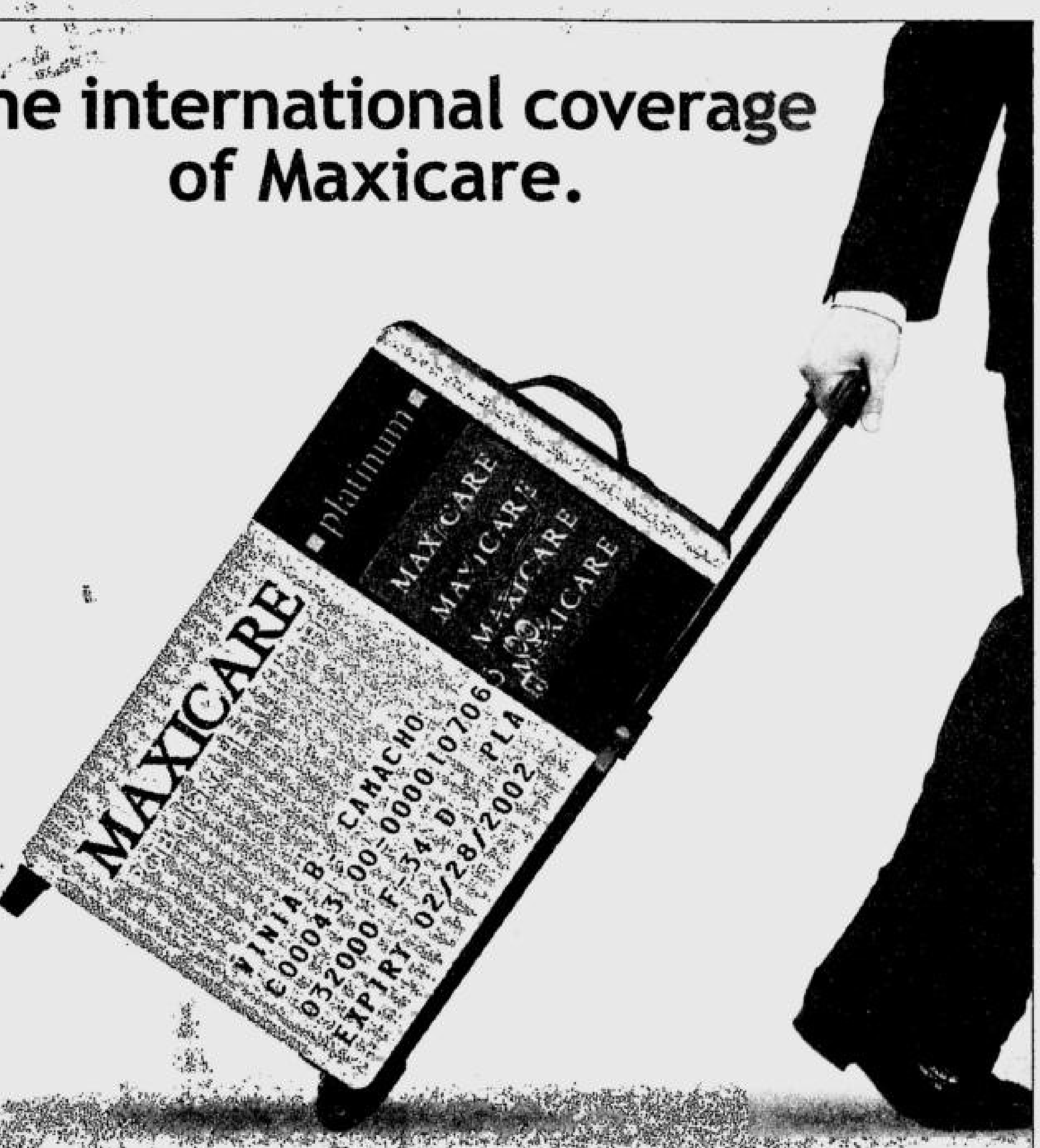
On most days, the narrow, winding streets of the ancient city of half a million are crowded with shoppers, worshippers trooping to its hundreds of Hindu and Buddhist temples, and the few tourists still coming.

The United States on Monday issued a warning to its citizens on the increased dangers of travelling to Nepal.

"While no tourists have been attacked to date, the dangers of Americans being caught in the wrong place at the wrong time have increased in the periods leading up to bandhs (strike)," it said.

Nepal, home to Mount Everest, and popular with both sightseers and climbers, depends heavily on tourism, but has seen tourist numbers dwindling because of the Maoist rebellion.

About a dozen senior US military officers are in the country assessing its progress against the rebels to determine what military aid it might need as part of Washington's pledge to help the government. *Reuters*



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Fidel Castro calls Mexican leader a liar

HAVANA—Cuba's relations with long-time ally Mexico reached a new low on Monday after President Fidel Castro repeatedly called President Vicente Fox a liar, and made public a private conversation between them to prove it.

Mexico reacted swiftly, with Fox's spokesperson, Rodolfo Elizondo, decrying the playing of a recording of the two presidents talking confidentially as "unacceptable" but saying Mexico would maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Castro, speaking before a national TV audience, insisted Fox lied about the Cuban leader's hasty departure last month from a UN aid summit in Monterrey, Mexico.

Cuba said at the time that Mexico, working on behalf of the United States, pressured Castro to either stay away from the summit or make himself scarce before President George W. Bush arrived. Mexican President Vicente Fox and Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda both denied pressuring Castro to leave.

"They were all lying left and right," Castro said.

The Cuban president played a tape of a private telephone conversation he had with Fox on the eve of the summit, in which Fox clearly urged Castro to leave the meeting early and urged him "not to attack the United States or President Bush."

On the tape Fox asks Castro to make his presentation at the summit and to return to Cuba on Thursday "so that you don't make Friday complicated for me." Bush was scheduled to arrive on Friday.

Breach of protocol

Making public the tape was a clear break with presidential protocol. Castro said the aftermath "of telling these truths could be that diplomatic relations are severed."

But Mexico did not react that strongly.

"Independent of anecdotes and episodes like this one, the Mexican government will continue its diplomatic relations with the republic of Cuba," said Elizondo, reading a statement to reporters on Monday evening.

The statement criticized the lack of democracy in communist Cuba and applauded Mexico's own democracy in words clearly directed at Mexico's pro-Cuba opposition, which has already criticized Fox for his handling of Castro's appearance at the Monterrey summit.

Castro said he would resign from office if the conversation proved false and challenged Fox to resign if it was not. *Reuters*

Facing death penalty, Blake pleads not guilty

LOS ANGELES—US film and television actor Robert Blake on Monday pleaded not guilty to murdering his wife after prosecutors formally charged him with the crime for which he could face the death penalty.

The 68-year-old star of the hit 1970s television series "Baretta" appeared in court in the Los Angeles suburb of Van Nuys for the first time since his arrest Thursday to deny all four charges against him.

"Not guilty your honor," the former child star said after the charges were read. He looked tired and drawn after nearly four days behind bars and as a media frenzy erupted over his detention.

Prosecutors on Monday formally charged Blake with one count of murdering his wife of six months, Bonny Lee Bakley, by "lying in wait," two counts of solicitation of murder and one count of conspiracy to murder.

The special circumstance of "lying in wait" refers to an alleged plot to kill Blake's colorful spouse and allows prosecutors to seek the death sentence under California law. It was however not known if they would do so.

Blake's bodyguard and handyman Earle Caldwell, 46, denied one count of conspiring to murder Bakley. He was arrested Thursday as he left Blake's home in Los Angeles.

No bail was set for Blake by Superior Court Commissioner Michael Duffey. The pair was due to appear in court again on May 1 to set a date for a preliminary hearing.

Prosecutors allege that Blake—a former child star whose career had waned following his professional revival with "Baretta"—shot 44-year-old Bakley in the head as she sat in their car near a Hollywood restaurant in May last year.

According to Blake, the pair had just had dinner when the actor returned to the eatery to collect his gun which he says slipped out of his wasteband as he ate dinner and returned to his car to find Bonny dead in the front seat. *AFP*

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(9) 1ST PRIZE	**ENTERTAINMENT SHOWCASE** JVC CTV, JVC Compo/VCD, JVC VHS player	April 19, 2002 May 24, 2002	April 12, 2002 May 17, 2002
(9) 2ND PRIZE	**KITCHEN SHOWCASE** La Germania Range, Whirlpool Microwave Oven, 8.5 cu. ft. National Refrigerator		
(9) 3RD PRIZE	**LIVING ROOM SHOWCASE** Sofa Back Table, Alessa Living Room Set, Center Table, 2 Side Tables		
GRAND DRAW PRIZES*		**DRAW DATE**	**DEADLINE OF ENTRIES**
(5) 1ST PRIZE	**HOUSE & LOT****	July 5, 2002	June 28, 2002
(5) 2ND PRIZE	**2002 MITSUBISHI ADVENTURE GLX-GAS**		
(4) 3RD PRIZE	**HOME SHOWCASE** Combination Entertainment, Kitchen, Living Room Showcase		
(40) CONSOLATION PRIZES	**LIVING ROOM SHOWCASE** Sofa Back Table, Living Room Set, Center Table, 2 Side Tables		

2 Monthly Draws to be held in 9 Sales Areas: GMA, North Luzon, Central Luzon, South Luzon 1, South Luzon 2, West Visayas, East Visayas, North Mindanao, South Mindanao • **Grand Draw in 4 Sales Areas:** GMA, Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao

*Actual prizes may vary from ones shown here. All prizes are tax-free. Houses and lots are convertible to P1.5M each; Home, entertainment, kitchen, and living room showcases are convertible to gift certificates equivalent to their respective cash values.

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Manero cleared of killings

Court also acquits priest killer's wife, brother

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

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MANERO

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POLICE BUST

Leyte vice mayor, 4 others arrested for shabu

TACLOBAN CITY—Police arrested on Monday the vice mayor of San Miguel, Leyte, a businessman and three others while allegedly holding shabu sessions in Barangay 77, this city.

Insp. Rene Antillon of the police City Anti-Narcotics Office identified the suspects as Vice Mayor Almar Balais, Saly Keirulf who owns a vulcanizing shop and some apartments here, William Canaya, Aileen Muertigue and a 17-year-old girl.

He said the suspects were arrested by his team in separate raids on the houses of Canaya and Keirulf at about 6 p.m.

The five have been detained at the city police station pending filing of criminal charges against them.

Antillon claimed that Balais, Canaya and the girl were holding a pot session inside Canaya's house when the raiding team arrived.

He said they did not know that Balais was the vice mayor of San Miguel until he introduced himself to the raiding team.

Antillon pointed out that the subjects of the raids were Canaya and his neighbor, Keirulf.

Allegedly seized from Canaya's group were three grams of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride), nine grams of marijuana and a .38 cal. revolver.

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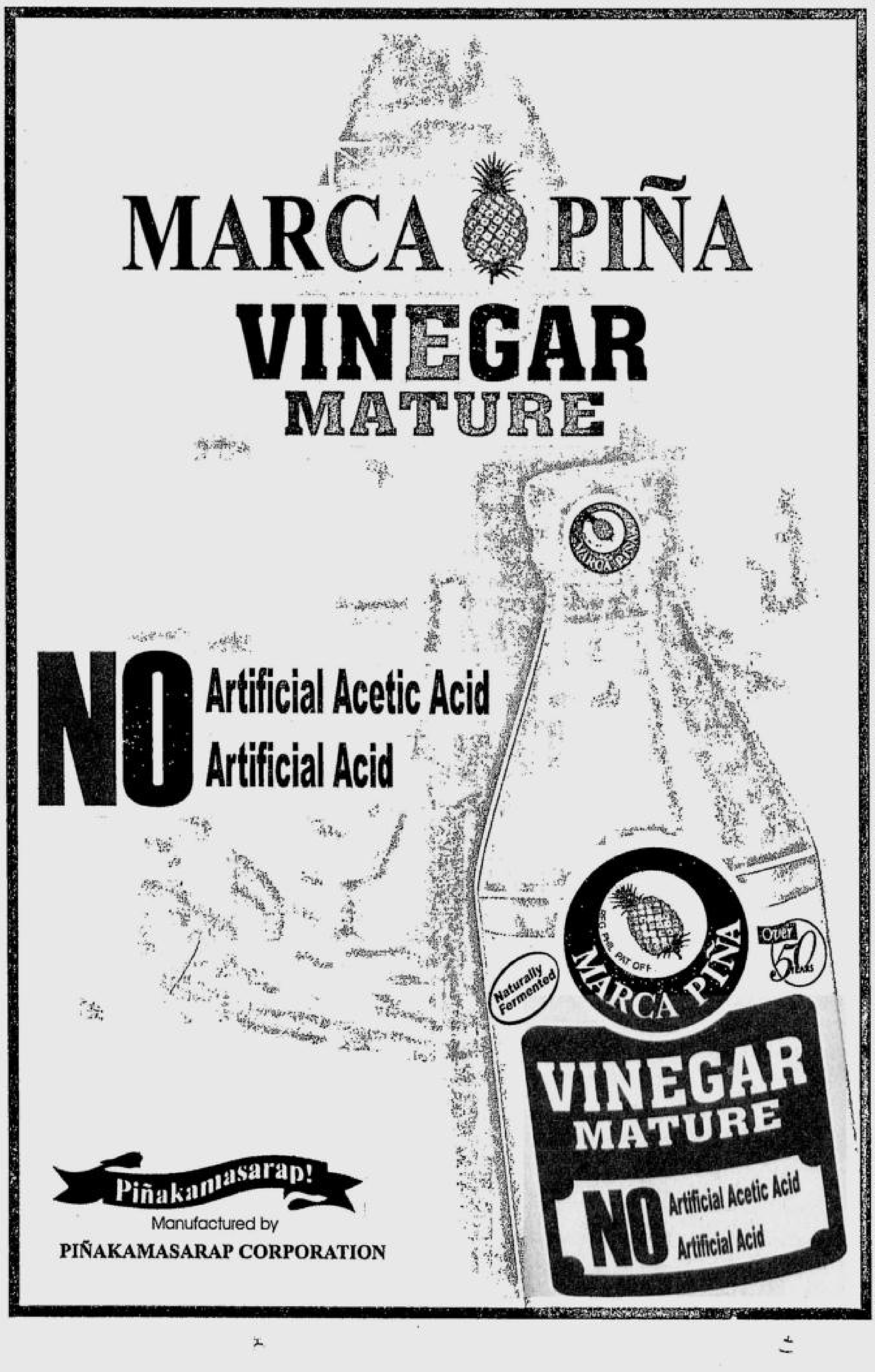
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Mad dog bites 17 in Zamboanga

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As the dog was being chased upon, it managed to attack at least 14 more victims before it was killed inside the El Pueblo Restaurant, also in Pasonanca.

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Dr. Mario Ariola, city veterinarian, expressed fears that the victims could already have been infected with rabies.

He said rabid dogs usually go mad.

"(The dog) was already positive with rabies. The victims should be immediately administered with anti-rabies vaccine," Ariola said.

The city health office admitted that it does not have enough anti-rabies vaccines.

Dr. Rogelio Silapan, city health officer, said the city government managed to purchase 16 vials of the vaccine, but more medicines are needed.

An increasing incidence of dog bites was noted in the city during the recent months.

Silapan said one victim, Regina Elnas, 48, of Barangay Suterville, died on March 6, nearly a month after a rabid dog bit her.

Ariola said the proliferation of stray rabid dogs "has become a serious problem for us now."

"This year alone, 18 dogs were confirmed to be rabid, excluding the one responsible for Sunday's incident," he said.

He blamed uncooperative pet owners for the rising incidence of rabid dogs.

"We never fail in our awareness drive, yet, who will comply with laws where violators only face a fine of 10 centavos?" Ariola said. He was referring to the 1948 and 1952 ordinances regulating pet ownership in the city.

Milabel Velasquez, chair of the city council's health committee, said a new ordinance about pet ownership is still pending approval.

There is also a plan to put up a city pound for stray dogs.

"It took 17 persons before we realized that such an animal pound or reviving and upgrading ancient laws is very important," Ariola said. ***Julie S. Alipala, PDI MIndanao Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi35° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 38° Lo 27°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 35° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/04/24/02

ROUNDUP

Hit by stray bullet

TACLOBAN CITY—An 11-year-old boy was in critical condition after he was hit by a stray bullet in the head on April 13 in Barangay Lanauan, Pastrana town. Police reports showed that Martin Dacuyan was watching television inside his uncle's house when he suddenly collapsed after a burst of gunfire. The boy was hit in the head and was immediately brought to the hospital in critical condition. Senior Supt. Teodorido Lapuz, Leyte police chief, ordered the Pastrana police to investigate and determine the identity of the person who fired the gun.

Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Suspected NPA killed

TACLOBAN CITY—A suspected New People's Army rebel was killed while another was captured in an encounter with government troops in a hinterland village in Matuguinao town, Samar on April 16. Capt. Felix Mangyao, commanding officer of the Civil Affairs Office of the 8th Infantry Division, identified the fatality as Noli de la Cruz, 29. Captured was Lolito Calagos, 18. Mangyao said about seven rebels clashed with 18 Army soldiers in Barangay Hinayagan, 8 kilometers from the town proper. He said the rebels left the body of De la Cruz during their retreat. Village officials buried De la Cruz on April 17 in Barangay Hinayagan. Calagos was placed in the custody of the 34th Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Blanca Aurora, San Jorge, Samar.

Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Rangers seize peacocks

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Rangers of the Protected Area Office in El Nido town confiscated on April 14 five Palawan peacocks, an eagle and a porcupine before these could be shipped to Manila. The endangered animals were abandoned. One of the peacocks, which died from suffocation, was found inside a box on board the MV Asuncion. The rangers said the owner of the animals already knew that they were coming so he left his baggage on the ship. Later, a certain Leodigario Ulson appeared in their office and pleaded that he be given a warning instead of confiscating the animals.

Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Davao trader abducted

DAVAO CITY—Four armed men abducted a businessman here at dawn last Sunday. Police said the victim, Alexander Gomez, 36, was on his way home from a drinking spree, when his vehicle was flagged down by four armed men as he was about to enter his house on Magsaysay Avenue. The victim was forced to board a waiting Holiday taxi. Police could not say whether a kidnap group was behind the incident since the victim's family has yet to receive word from the abductors.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Drug suspects nabbed

CANLUBANG, Laguna—Rizal provincial police have arrested five suspected members of a drug syndicate, including a police officer. Arrested are Monico Picones Jr., 48, of Barangay Calumpang, Binangonan, Rizal; PO1 Ray Mangubat, 29, of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro and assigned at the National Capital Region; Pedro Bracamonte, 37, of San Andres Bukid, Manila; Marvin Picones, 29, of Binangonan, Rizal; and Yolanda Picones, 47, of Malabon, Metro Manila. A police team arrested them at Barangay Calumpang in Binangonan. Firearms of different caliber and shabu paraphernalia were recovered from the suspects.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Student gang-raped

CANLUBANG, Laguna—Police arrested four young men for allegedly gang-raping an 18-year-old student in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal. A police report said the suspects, aged 21 and below, reportedly invited the victim to a drinking session. When the victim got drunk and unconscious, the suspects allegedly took turns raping the victim. Charges have been filed against the suspects.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Search for 'Sili Queen'

LEGAZPI CITY—Albay's yearly Magayon Festival in May, which has spawned the inclusion of a Bicolano in the Guinness Book of World Records for his *sili*-eating record, will test "women power" in this year's festivities. Gov. Al Francis Bichara planned to make this year's *sili*-eating contest exclusively for women in its quest for the first "Sili Queen" of the world. Whoever eats the most number of pieces of the hottest pepper species, locally known as "*sangariya*" or "*sambalas*," wins, Bichara said. Albay Tourism Council chief Jose Briones invited contestants from outside the province to join the event.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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He said rabid dogs usually go mad.

"(The dog) was already positive with rabies. The victims should be immediately administered with anti-rabies vaccine," Ariola said.

The city health office admitted that it does not have enough anti-rabies vaccines.

Dr. Rogelio Silapan, city health officer, said the city government managed to purchase 16 vials of the vaccine, but more medicines are needed.

An increasing incidence of dog bites was noted in the city during the recent months.

Silapan said one victim, Regina Elnas, 48, of Barangay Suterville, died on March 6, nearly a month after a rabid dog bit her.

Ariola said the proliferation of stray rabid dogs "has become a serious problem for us now."

"This year alone, 18 dogs were confirmed to be rabid, excluding the one responsible for Sunday's incident," he said.

He blamed uncooperative pet owners for the rising incidence of rabid dogs.

"We never fail in our awareness drive, yet, who will comply with laws where violators only face a fine of 10 centavos?" Ariola said. He was referring to the 1948 and 1952 ordinances regulating pet ownership in the city.

Milabel Velasquez, chair of the city council's health committee, said a new ordinance about pet ownership is still pending approval.

There is also a plan to put up a city pound for stray dogs.

"It took 17 persons before we realized that such an animal pound or reviving and upgrading ancient laws is very important," Ariola said. ***Julie S. Alipala, PDI MIndanao Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI35° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 27° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 38° Lo 27°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 35° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 25°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/04/24/02

ROUNDUP

Hit by stray bullet

TACLOBAN CITY—An 11-year-old boy was in critical condition after he was hit by a stray bullet in the head on April 13 in Barangay Lanauan, Pastrana town. Police reports showed that Martin Dacuyan was watching television inside his uncle's house when he suddenly collapsed after a burst of gunfire. The boy was hit in the head and was immediately brought to the hospital in critical condition. Senior Supt. Teodorido Lapuz, Leyte police chief, ordered the Pastrana police to investigate and determine the identity of the person who fired the gun.

Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Suspected NPA killed

TACLOBAN CITY—A suspected New People's Army rebel was killed while another was captured in an encounter with government troops in a hinterland village in Matuguinao town, Samar on April 16. Capt. Felix Mangyao, commanding officer of the Civil Affairs Office of the 8th Infantry Division, identified the fatality as Noli de la Cruz, 29. Captured was Lolito Calagos, 18. Mangyao said about seven rebels clashed with 18 Army soldiers in Barangay Hinayagan, 8 kilometers from the town proper. He said the rebels left the body of De la Cruz during their retreat. Village officials buried De la Cruz on April 17 in Barangay Hinayagan. Calagos was placed in the custody of the 34th Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Blanca Aurora, San Jorge, Samar.

Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Rangers seize peacocks

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Rangers of the Protected Area Office in El Nido town confiscated on April 14 five Palawan peacocks, an eagle and a porcupine before these could be shipped to Manila. The endangered animals were abandoned. One of the peacocks, which died from suffocation, was found inside a box on board the MV Asuncion. The rangers said the owner of the animals already knew that they were coming so he left his baggage on the ship. Later, a certain Leodigario Ulson appeared in their office and pleaded that he be given a warning instead of confiscating the animals.

Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Davao trader abducted

DAVAO CITY—Four armed men abducted a businessman here at dawn last Sunday. Police said the victim, Alexander Gomez, 36, was on his way home from a drinking spree, when his vehicle was flagged down by four armed men as he was about to enter his house on Magsaysay Avenue. The victim was forced to board a waiting Holiday taxi. Police could not say whether a kidnap group was behind the incident since the victim's family has yet to receive word from the abductors.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Drug suspects nabbed

CANLUBANG, Laguna—Rizal provincial police have arrested five suspected members of a drug syndicate, including a police officer. Arrested are Monico Picones Jr., 48, of Barangay Calumpang, Binangonan, Rizal; PO1 Ray Mangubat, 29, of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro and assigned at the National Capital Region; Pedro Bracamonte, 37, of San Andres Bukid, Manila; Marvin Picones, 29, of Binangonan, Rizal; and Yolanda Picones, 47, of Malabon, Metro Manila. A police team arrested them at Barangay Calumpang in Binangonan. Firearms of different caliber and shabu paraphernalia were recovered from the suspects.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Student gang-raped

CANLUBANG, Laguna—Police arrested four young men for allegedly gang-raping an 18-year-old student in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal. A police report said the suspects, aged 21 and below, reportedly invited the victim to a drinking session. When the victim got drunk and unconscious, the suspects allegedly took turns raping the victim. Charges have been filed against the suspects.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Search for 'Sili Queen'

LEGAZPI CITY—Albay's yearly Magayon Festival in May, which has spawned the inclusion of a Bicolano in the Guinness Book of World Records for his *sili*-eating record, will test "women power" in this year's festivities. Gov. Al Francis Bichara planned to make this year's *sili*-eating contest exclusively for women in its quest for the first "Sili Queen" of the world. Whoever eats the most number of pieces of the hottest pepper species, locally known as "*sangariya*" or "*sambalas*," wins, Bichara said. Albay Tourism Council chief Jose Briones invited contestants from outside the province to join the event.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

₱30 MILLION LOST

5-hour fire hits Eastern Samar town market

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—A fire of still unknown origin hit the public market of Guiuan town in Eastern Samar early Sunday, destroying close to P30 million worth of property.

Adriano Fuego, director of the Office of the Civil Defense in Eastern Visayas, said no casualty was reported in the fire, which lasted for five hours.

Separate reports reaching the OCD and the Bureau of Fire Protection here showed that the fire broke out at about 1 a.m. at a stall owned by Paquito Holanda. It quickly spread to nearby stalls.

Reports said the fire destroyed 118 stalls and makeshift vending areas and damaged a two-story building.

Guiuan policemen immediately cordoned off the area to prevent looters from taking advantage of the commotion.

Firefighters from the nearby towns of Paranas, Basey and Borongan responded to the fire alarm raised by the Guiuan fire station.

Even fire trucks from Tacloban came to Guiuan to help put out the fire. Guiuan is 107 kilometers west of this city.

Senior Insp. Juan Guimbaolibot, Guiuan police chief, said arson probers were still looking into the cause of the fire.

Investigators noted that it took almost 30 minutes before residents living near the market noticed the fire.

Guiuan Mayor Cornelio Sison activated the town's disaster and coordinating council to assess the damage caused by the fire and to determine the form of assistance to be extended to the victims.

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* Awarded in Bali, Indonesia March 26, 2002

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Gov't troops alerted on NPA hit squad in Panay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI-Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Police and military personnel in Western Visayas have been placed on alert after authorities received intelligence reports that the communist New People's Army has formed a hit squad to go after government troops and intelligence agents.

Maj. Oscar Lasangue, group head of the Armed Forces' Civil Relations Group in the region, said the 12-member armed unit was formed in March by the Southern Front Committee (SFC) of the Communist Party's Panay regional committee.

The SFC operates in the southern part of Iloilo and portions of Antique.

"The targets also include those (whom) the rebels consider abusive businessmen and politicians," said Lasangue.

He said the aliases of members of the NPA unit have already been known, but he declined to disclose these.

The rural-based NPA unit will strike in urban centers with the support of rebels in mass organizations under the CPP's United Front umbrella, said Lasangue.

"They will provide the targets, safehouses and vehicles of the hit team," he said. "We will preempt their moves by intensifying our intelligence operations and by alerting all our personnel."

NPA rebels have already stepped up their armed attacks.

On April 19, they burned a Ceres passenger bus in Barangay Banate, Pontevedra town in Capiz.

The bus, which came from Roxas City, was on its way to President Roxas town when three suspected armed rebels boarded the vehicle and ordered the driver to proceed to Barangay Banate.

Lasangue said around 25 rebels belonging to the CPP's Eastern Front Committee were waiting in the village.

After ordering the passengers and driver to leave, the rebels poured gasoline on the bus and burned it. The bus was reportedly worth about P2.4 million.

The rebels fled in two groups, with the main pack headed for Barangay Ngalan in Maayon town and the other, to the hinterlands of Banate.

Lasangue said the rebels had sent three letters signed by a certain Ruben Lorca to Roy Yanson, manager of the Vallacar Transit that operates the Ceres buses, demanding the payment of "revolutionary taxes."

No amount was specified in the letters, but Lorca warned of punitive actions against the company if it ignored their demands.

Earlier, the NPA in Panay claimed that it had frustrated the military's operations in the past months, expanded its "mass base" and increased its armed strength.

In the February issue of Daba-Daba, the rebels' underground publication in Hiligaynon, the NPA said the Army's Task Group Panay "punched the air" during their operations against the rebels, especially in central Panay.

It claimed responsibility for the burning of about P7 million worth of construction equipment of F.F. Cruz and Co. in Sebaste town, Antique, last Sept. 9.

The construction firm was "punished" for not paying "revolutionary taxes," the publication said.

DENR to oppose ₱5-B mineral exploration plan in Pujada Bay

MATI, Davao Oriental—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will not allow a proposed P5-billion mineral exploration project in the Pujada Bay here.

The bay is a protected area, DENR regional executive director Jeremias Dolino was quoted by David Pajarillaga of the DENR's coastal environment program here as sating.

The National Integrated Protected Areas Systems (Nipas) Law of 1991 defines protected areas as "identified portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation."

Then President Fidel Ramos declared the 21,000-hectare Pujada Bay a protected seascape and landscape in 1994. The bay is home to the extremely rare and endangered *dugong* and whale shark, the DENR said.

The proposed mineral exploration site covers some 20,000 hectares of land belonging to the Mandaya and Higaonon natives.

The tribal groups, who used to have a harmonious relationship, have threatened to declare war against each other after the Mandaya natives pushed for the mining project. The Higaonon are strongly against it.

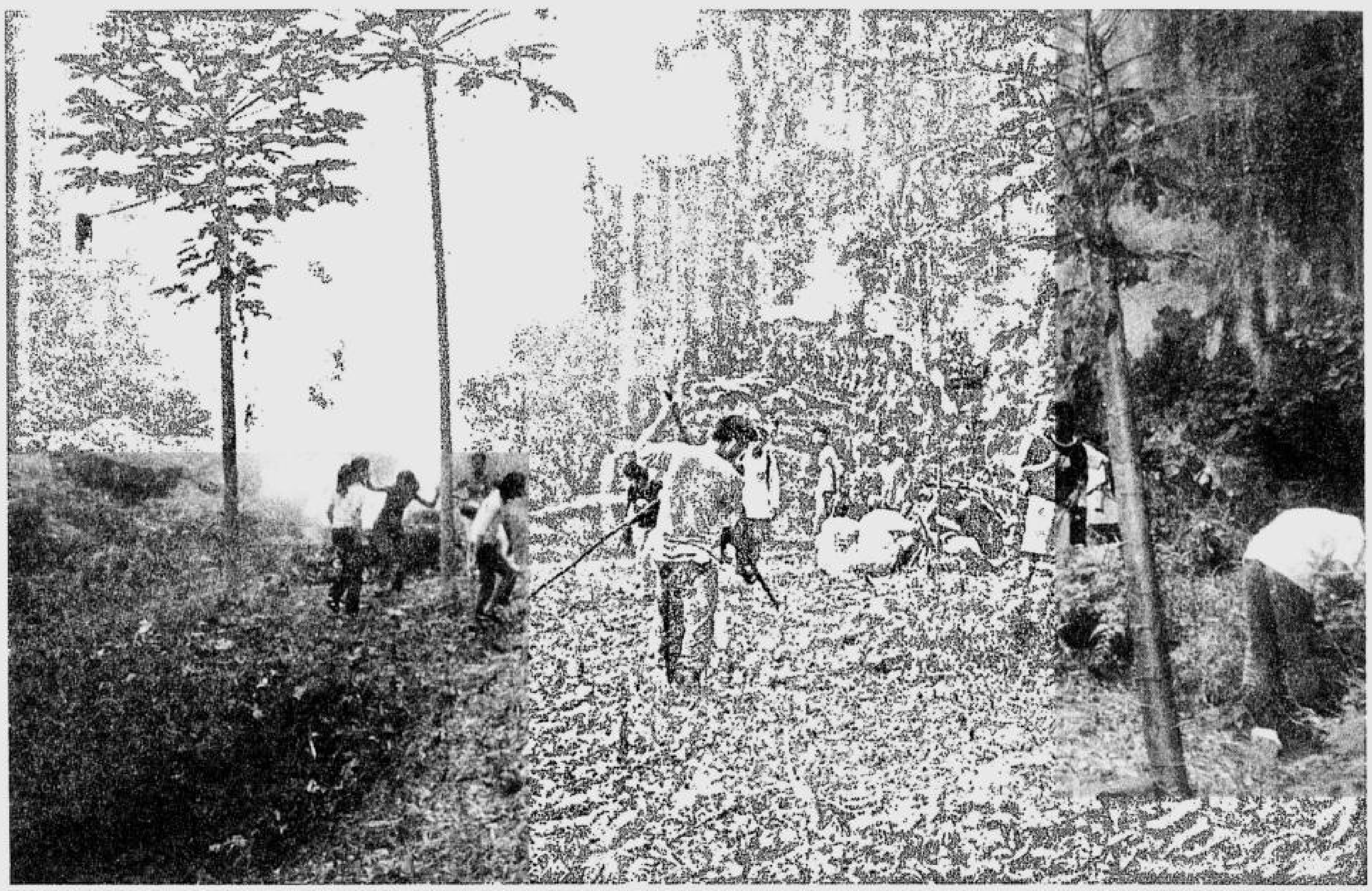
Gov. Maria Elena Palma Gil has withheld a "favorable recommendation" being sought by the mining companies for their exploration projects, pending resolution of the tribal conflict.

Palma Gil chairs the provincial environment and natural resources council, an administrative body that regulates environmental projects in the province.

Under the Mining Act of 1995, mining companies must secure favorable recommendations, not only from people living in the proposed mining sites but also from the provincial environment council before they can start to operate.

But Roque Agton, regional director of the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples, said the council "should ignore these anti-mining Higaonon natives because they are not natives of Davao Oriental but of Bukidnon."

Agton said the NCIP has already conducted consultations among the tribal residents in the proposed exploration site and the result was "overwhelmingly pro-mining." ***Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



VOLUNTEERS clean up the surroundings of the Tingga Falls in Batangas City.

MEI MAGSINO/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Group launches drive to save Batangas falls

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BATANGAS CITY—The Sagip Tingga Falls Movement was launched at the falls site here on Sunday in time for the Earth Day celebration.

Some P11 million in pledges to fund the movement were raised during the event.

Gov. Hermilando Mandanas and Rep. Frank Perez (second district) pledged P5 million each while City Mayor Eduardo Dimacuha committed himself to give P1 million.

Guest speaker Cecille Guidote Alvarez, wife of Environment Secretary Heherzon Alvarez, said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will reach out to international financial institutions to bring back the lost grandeur of the falls.

About 300 people walked down the 195 stone steps, most of which are now made of improvised bamboo ladders, leading to the falls.

With Alvarez were Boy Scouts of the Philippines regional director Expedito Eduardino, BSP director for administration Romeo Apuli, provincial administrator Augusto Claveria, provincial environment officer Evelyn Estigoy and city councilors.

The movement to save the Tingga Falls, once considered the Pagsanjan Falls of Batangas, started when a story about its deteriorating state appeared on the INQUIRER Southern Luzon on Feb. 13.

On Feb. 18, barangay officials and the City Environment and Natural Resources Office started a campaign of public awareness about the dying falls and their mission to save it.

"We believe that the Tingga Falls is dying, not dead, and we can still save it," said Philip Baroja, Cenro officer.

The city's BSP chapter was also tapped to clean the falls, along with the Cenro staff and officials and residents of Barangay Tingga Labac.

From there, the movement was formed and the mission to save the falls began.

On Easter Sunday, the Boy Scouts and volunteer residents went up the source of the falls and traced where the garbage floating on the waters has been coming from.

The group, mostly teenagers, immediately started cleaning up the Tingga Falls site.

Marina Apuli, an executive of the BSP Batangas City Council who led the boy scouts to the falls, said the group has scheduled a cleanup every Sunday morning.

Miriam Catapang, a council member of Barangay Tingga, said the movement to save the falls started the cleanup on March 10.

Catapang said barangay officials provided food and drinks for the volunteers.

The movement has agreed to meet every Monday night.

"We have ordered the City Engineer's Office to estimate the cost and program of work for the rehabilitation of the Tingga Falls," Dimacuha said.

Richard Prior, chair of the BSP Batangas City chapter board, said he noticed that the wall beside the falls could be used for rock climbing and can be developed for tourism and commercial purposes.

The environment office of nearby Lipa City, upon learning of the drive to save the Tingga Falls, announced that its Cenro would conduct a clean-up operation of the city's coasts.

Cavite and Rizal provinces also took steps to restore the grandeur of their coastlines.

"We are again serving as a model for other provinces," Dimacuha said, "We are again being followed in the preservation and restoration of the environment, and it all started with the Batangueños' will to revive the Tingga Falls."

Palawan power consumers against PPA win Round 1

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Residents have scored an initial victory in their bid to eliminate the power purchase adjustment (PPA) in their electric bills.

Hundreds of residents led by Vice Gov. David Ponce de Leon and the provincial council trooped to the office of the Palawan Electric Cooperative (Paleco) last week to air their grievances against the National Power Corp. and the independent power producers for the imposition of the PPA.

The residents paid only the basic rates of electricity they actually consumed and refused to pay the PPA.

Initially, Paleco manager Ponciano Payuyo refused to accept the payment without the PPA because it would unduly mix up their accounting system.

He also warned the residents that if they did not pay the PPA, the Napocor might be constrained to withdraw its support and cut off their electric lines.

Ponce de Leon, however, argued that if Paleco does not accept their payments, they would bring the issue to court and question the cooperative's refusal.

Residents were given a chance to pay their bills without the PPA until 12 midnight but those who were going to pay without the PPA after that would no longer be honored. Payuyo said this was until such time that the Napocor has resolved the issue. A public hearing was conducted the other day.

Payuyo said Paleco could not do anything about the collection of the PPA because it was also an unwilling collector. The PPA was imposed on them by the Napocor, which apparently shoulders some of the burden in the power purchase, he said.

He even encouraged the residents to pay the PPA under protest so as not to prejudice them in their later claims.

Ponce de Leon said their march was made in response to a nationwide call against the PPA.

He believed that positive action like a protest march is more effective.

A case was already filed calling for a temporary stop in the collection of PPA by the Palawan Chamber of Commerce, but it was dismissed by the court for lack of jurisdiction.

The Task Force PPA was formed to strengthen the position of the city residents against the PPA.

Bearing placards, the residents did not mind the heat of the sun while marching.

According to task force chair Dr. Ben Carlos, the imposition of the PPA has caused the slowdown of business in the city.***Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Drastic changes demanded in gov't approach to anti-logging campaign

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, head of the military's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) based in Camp Nakar here, has called for drastic changes in the government's approach against illegal logging.

Carolina was reacting to an INQUIRER report on the rampant illegal logging activities in northern Quezon along the Sierra Madre mountain ranges.

The report has created a stir among environmental groups, government officials and the military in the province.

Carolina suggested that the indigenous people living in the logging areas be given the widest participation in the campaign against illegal logging.

Instead of being designated as "forest guardians," they should be trained as forest rangers, he said.

"The natives possess the most important motivation in the preservation of the forest because it's their natural community which they have known for long," Carolina said.

An environmental legal defense center based here has volunteered its services in prosecuting the illegal loggers.

THE DISCOVERED hot logs floating on the Agus River in Quezon.

"We believe that environmental protection is not solely confined to a particular office or government agency," said Asis Perez, head of the Tanggol-Kalikasan-Southern Tagalog. He stressed that environmental protection should be the concern of all.

Rep. Rafael Nantes clarified that he has long been conducting efforts to stop the widespread illegal logging in his area.

"Records at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources would show the results of my initiatives in protecting the forested area from illegal logging activities," he said.

He claimed that it was also on record that he was the one who requested the DENR to terminate the erring local environment official in the area for being involved in alleged anomalous transactions with illegal loggers.

Gov. Wilfrido Enverga has formed the Task Force Kalikasan Reina to help solve illegal logging in Real, Infanta and General Nakar.

But the group immediately drew criticisms for engaging in "politicking."

Forester Lufo Telan of the DENR provincial office belied newspaper reports that the task force had confiscated at least three million board feet of illegally cut logs.

"Sighting is one thing, confiscating and seizure is another. If they will insist that they have already confiscated the illegal forest products, there should have been the required scaling by the DENR people. But there was none," he pointed out.

He explained that "technically, there have been no seizures yet of forest products."

Armando Rutaquio, DENR provincial head, revealed that based on the agency's last inspection of the area, only some 800 pieces of square logs or around 80,000 board feet were kept in the custody of the task force.

The logs were deposited in the BLISS Compound in Barangay Tunguhin in Infanta town, he said.

"But the items are not yet in the custody of the DENR. It is still with the task force," he explained.

Relatives, pals say slain mayor was 'pro-people'

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

JONES, Isabela—Relatives and friends of slain Mayor Jesus Sebastian Sr. yesterday dismissed communist accusations that he was involved in land grabbing, graft and corruption, and human rights violations.

Sebastian was "a pro-people leader and a man of integrity," they said.

Felisa Daguro-Sebastian, the mayor's wife, said her husband "lived his life with integrity for the people despite numerous death threats from New People's Army rebels."

Sebastian, a lawyer, was shot dead by NPA assassins at the lobby of the municipal hall on Monday morning.

His relatives said the NPA's accusation that he was accepting commissions from government projects in his town was a "preposterous and brazen lie."

The NPA's Benito Tesorio Command, through its spokesperson Ka Delio Baladon, has claimed responsibility for the killing.

Baladon, in a two-page statement released a few hours after the assassination, said Sebastian was "punished" for his alleged illegal activities and "anti-revolutionary" measures, like supporting military operations against the NPA in his town.

But Sebastian's friends and colleagues described him as a "simple man" whose goal was to help his constituents.

He wanted to uplift the living conditions of his town mates by distributing land to farmers, implementing a coffee plantation project and constructing a cement plant in his town.

Supt. Nelson Nario, police provincial director, said he was hoping that the assailants would be identified as soon as witnesses' statements were completed and the sketches made.

Nario said their latest information showed that 10 rebels, not eight, were involved in the attack.

After shooting Sebastian, the rebels ransacked the mayor's Nissan Urvan and seized a grenade launcher, three M-16 rifles, two 9-mm pistols and a .45 cal. revolver belonging to the mayor and his bodyguards.

The rebels, who were wearing military uniforms, fled toward Barangay San Isidro here and Barangay San Felipe in Echague town.

Witnesses described Sebastian's attackers as between 35 and 39 years old.

Pursuing Army soldiers found a magazine for a .45 cal. pistol in Barangay San Felipe. The village has a network of roads leading to the mountainous areas of Echague, San Guillermo and Angadanan towns.

TDL 650
TDL 650

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

THE MYSTERY DEEPENS
Two nearly identical Nissan pick-up vans have been impounded by the Traffic Management Group in Davao City. They have similar license plates, and chassis and engine numbers but different owners, who have yet to show up despite repeated requests.

Javier prosecution submits 157 pieces of evidence

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, ANTIQUE—After 16 years, the prosecution panel in the murder case of former Gov. Evelio Javier rested its case in the trial on the petition for bail of the accused.

In a 13-page formal offer of exhibits dated March 22, Senior State Prosecutor Leo Dacera III and private prosecutor Aurelio Trampe submitted 157 pieces of evidence to Judge Rudy Castrojas of the Regional Trial Court's Branch 12.

The evidence included sworn statements of witnesses and physical evidence to back up their case against former Antique Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador and 16 others.

The filing of the formal offer of exhibits was in compliance with the order of Castrojas in open court during the hearing on March 19.

The judge directed the prosecution to submit its formal offer of exhibits within 10 days. He also ordered the defense to file their comments or opposition within 10 days after receipt of the formal offer of exhibits.

Castrojas gave both parties 15 days to file their respective memorandums after he had ruled on the formal offer of exhibits of the prosecution in the petition for bail of the accused.

Under court rules, all pieces of evidence presented in the petition for bail will automatically be admitted in the trial on the merit of the case.

Pacificador and the other 16 co-accused are facing murder, frustrated murder and attempted murder charges for the killing of Javier and the wounding of several others on Feb. 11, 1986. They are detained at the provincial jail.

Pacificador, a close ally of then President Ferdinand Marcos, was named alleged mastermind in the Javier killing.

Pacificador, also a lawyer, said their long detention has taken its toll on his family and career.

"I could not practice my profession and I've become dependent on help from my friends," he said.

Aside from Pacificador, also charged are Pacificador's son Rodolfo, lawyer Avelino Javellana, Eduardo "Boy Muslim" Iran, Oscar Tiauson, Jimmy Punzalan, former Philippine Constabulary Capt. John Paloy, Vicente Vegafria, Ramon Hortillano, Henry Salaver, Eleazar Idemne, Rolando Bernardino, Jose Seguerra, Henry Seguerra and three unidentified persons known only as alias Akay, Nonoy, Totong and Dolfo.

Rodolfo Pacificador is seeking political asylum in Canada where he fled after the killing. The Philippine government has filed a petition before the Canadian courts for his extradition.

The whereabouts of Iran remain unknown. There had been unconfirmed reports that he was killed or seriously wounded in Malaysia two years ago.

Iran was believed to be the leader of the gunmen who shot and pursued Javier from the grounds of the capitol to a comfort room of a house, some 250 meters away, where he was finished off.

There have been 75 hearings since the trial of the 16-year murder case started on Nov. 9, 1987.

Iloilo execs treated to 'pranic healing'

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Instead of the usual team-building and group techniques for stress management, 21 department heads at the provincial capitol were treated to a session of "pranic healing."

Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. said the two-day pranic-healing seminar would make them "more effective managers providing healthy atmosphere for work."

The seminar was held on April 16 and 17 at the Carmelite retreat house in Sambag, Jaro District.

Pranic healing comes from the word "*prana*" or "energy" that either gives life or destroys it, depending on whether it's "positive" or "negative," beliefs preached in Buddhism and Hinduism.

That is similar to other Eastern philosophies of good health that sees two kinds of energy, the "*ying*" or the "*yang*" permeating the universe, whether living or not.

In pranic healing, diseases are viewed as outcomes of excess or "congested" energy or the lack of it. The healer's role is to "sweep away" the negative energy and "energize" a patient through his or her *chakhras* or energy points.

The province asked Tina de Guzman and Tess Baquial, trainers from the Iloilo chapter of the World Pranic Healing Foundation, to give the lectures.

Both are registered nurses teaching pranic healing and Arhatic Yoga popularized by Chinese-Filipino Choa Kok Sui.

They said pranic healing has vast healing potentials that modern Western medicine has yet to explore.

De Guzman said pranic healing goes beyond several hours of healing session. It entails a "change of lifestyle" to ensure healthy living.

That means quitting or reducing one's intake of cigarettes or alcohol, and means years of practice. But these did not stop her associate, Baquial from telling the participants: "You have finished the basic course. Congratulations: You are now certified healers."

Provincial employees, who attended the seminar, found immediate uses of what they had learned.

Provincial agriculturist Inocencio Parian tried it on his wife, who has been suffering from a recurring backache.

She said she felt relieved and wanted more treatment from him.

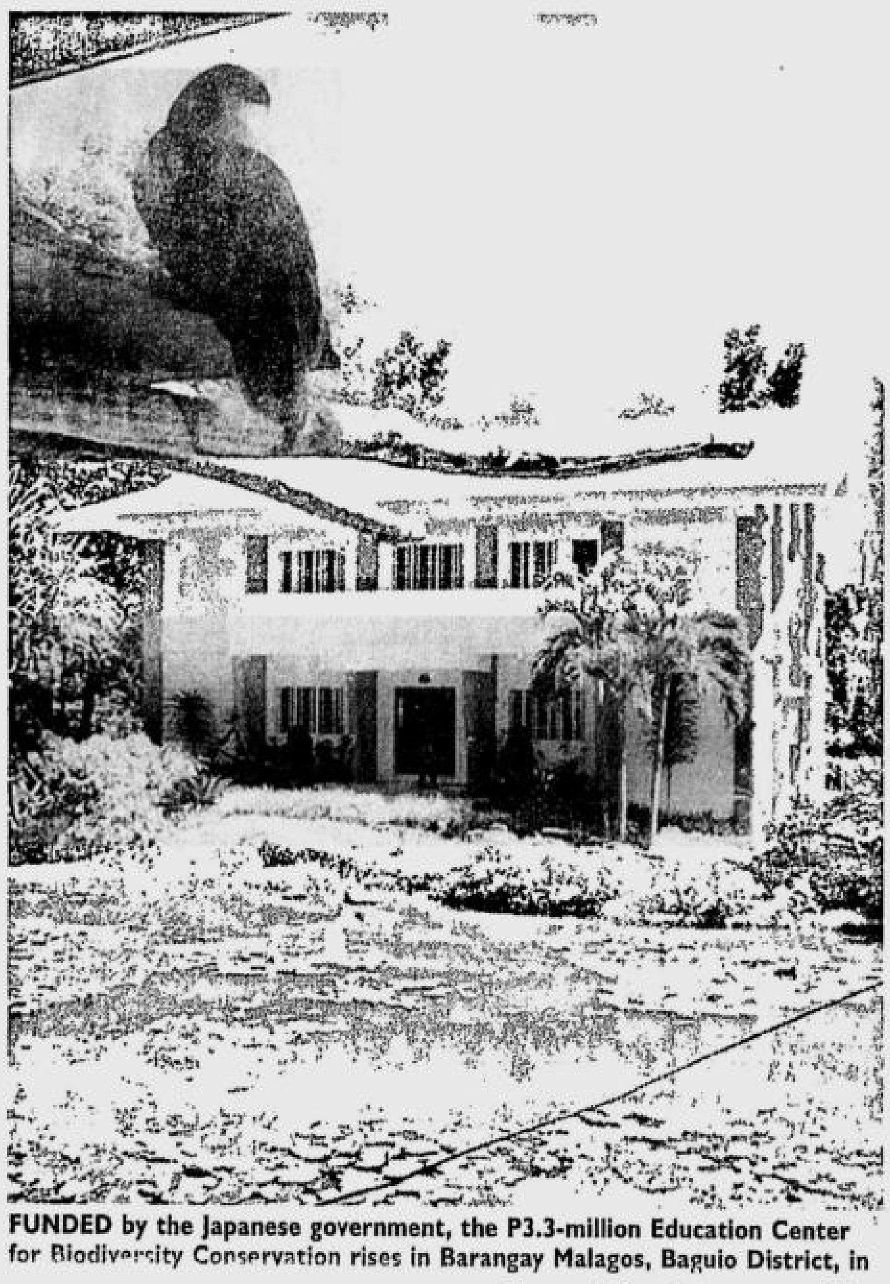
"I was skeptical at the beginning but now, I want to undergo additional seminars to increase my knowledge," Parian said.

He added he would have a use for his new found skills in helping his 150 staff including municipal agriculturists.

"This is very useful because it teaches us how to help ourselves and others in relieving tensions as well as improve our health," said Jimmy Almendros, assistant chief of the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center.

Dr. Leticia Daria, chief of the dental office at the Provincial Capitol here, said the seminar helped her "reduce pressures."

"I am relieved completely," she said after a workshop that had pairs switching roles as "healers" and "patients."



FUNDED by the Japanese government, the P3.3-million Education Center for Biodiversity Conservation rises in Barangay Malagos, Baguio District, in

RP Eagle group opens training unit

DAVAO CITY—A P3.3-million training center where people can learn about biodiversity conservation has been unveiled by the Philippine Eagle Foundation in Barangay Malagos, Baguio District here.

The Education Center for Biodiversity Conservation, funded by the Japanese government, will also be used as venue for lectures and presentations about the Philippine eagle and its habitat.

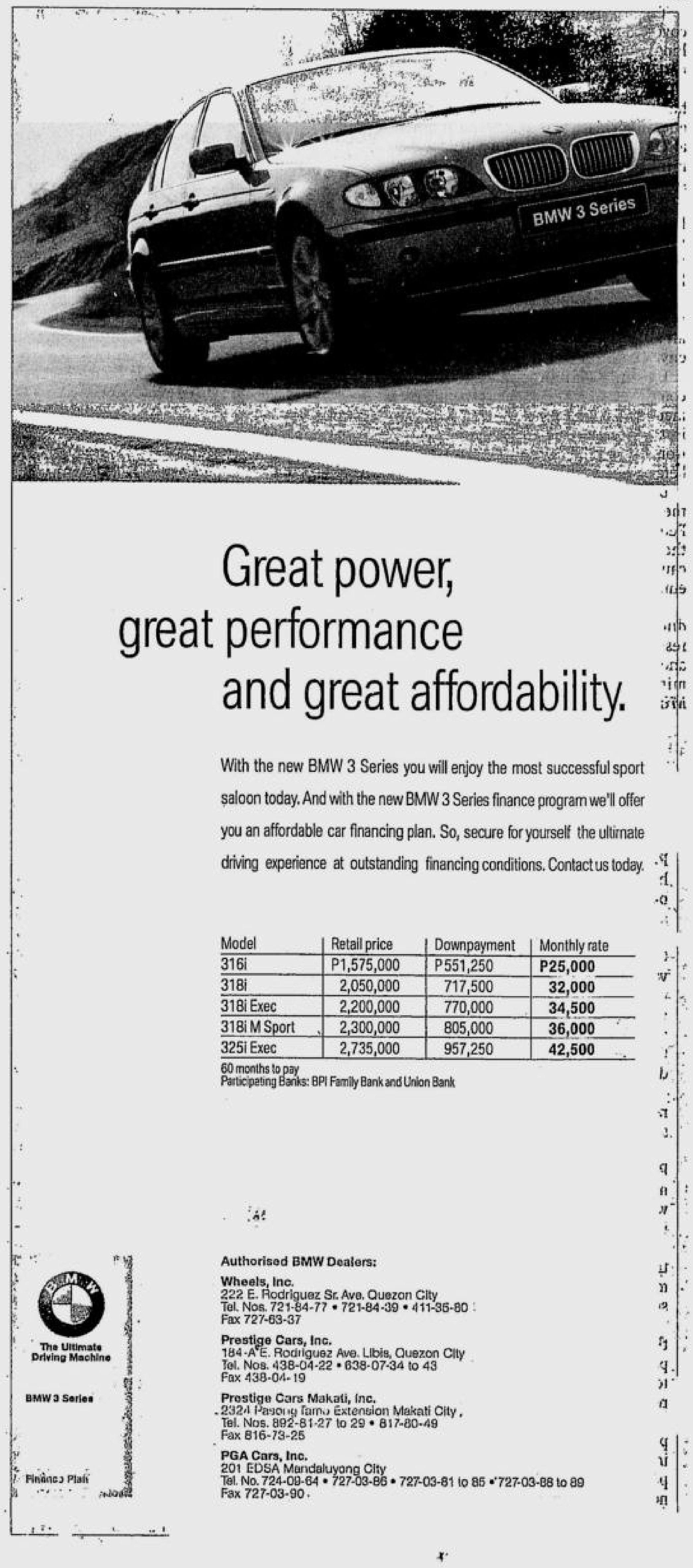
It houses a library, a multipurpose exhibit area, a training hall and a touch-and-learn area for children.

PEF officials said the center was designed to meet the growing need of teachers, biologists, professionals, students and residents to learn about the near extinct national bird.

Established in 1987, the PEF is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving the endangered Philippine eagle *(Pithecophaga jefferyi)* and its rainforest habitat.

The PEF, which operates entirely on private voluntary contributions, is also involved in a breeding program for Philippine eagle.

Since its inception, the foundation has already hatched 10 eagles from pairs in captivity but only nine have survived. ***Joselle Badilla,*** *PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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INQUIRER*Northern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandayrel ◉ *Bureau Chief* Rolando B. Fernandez

Putting RP back on the tobacco map

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
Bangar, La Union

EVEN before Filipino consumers have begun to fully understand the biggest consumer food scare in recent years—genetically modified organisms or GMOs—they are about to face yet another concern. This time, it's genetically modified (GM) tobacco.

Scientists from Philip Morris, the largest cigarette manufacturer in the world, were recently in the Ilocos region, the country's biggest producer of Virginia tobacco, to demonstrate to reporters that it does not use GM tobacco in its cigarettes.

"At this time, we continue to be interested in buying only conventional tobacco in our commercial cigarettes," declared Philip Morris agronomist Paul Adalia.

But he admitted that GM tobacco varieties have been grown in several countries, although such action has increasingly become the subject of debate, particularly because of its potential long-term effects on the environment and public safety.

Smoking alternative

In the United States, Vector Group Ltd. announced last month that it would launch its newest product "Quest"—a cigarette made from GM tobacco and marketed as "nicotine-free" and a "smoking alternative"—this third quarter.

Although growing GM tobacco continues to meet strong resistance among most farmers in the US, Vector has succeeded in contracting 500 farmers to grow about 3,000 acres of the nicotine-free strain in Pennsylvania. It has been convincing other farmers in Illinois and Oklahoma states to do the same, according the US-based Tobacco Reporter.

Because of this, US tobacco farmers have expressed apprehension that their overseas customers, especially anti-GMO countries in Europe and Asia, might reject US-grown tobacco all together, the publication added.

To ascertain that Philippine Virginia and Burley tobacco that is being bought by Philip Morris is of high quality and is GMO-free, the company started a tobacco identity preservation program (TIPP) last year.

The TIPP, a crop management program which essentially ensures that the crop is made traceable to its source (the farmer), is implemented in over 40 countries where Philip Morris sources tobacco, Adalia explained.

Quality check

More than a documentation system to monitor GMO in the supply chain, the program is also a quality-check mechanism to ensure that the crop satisfies all other quality parameters for crop protection agents, tobacco specific nitrosamines (TSNA), purity, smell and others, he added.

From a company-assisted farm in Bangar to the processing plant at Continental Leaf Inc. (a Philip Morris supplier), in Bacnotan (both in La Union), the media group was shown the various steps involved in ensuring traceability.

A FARMER harvests tobacco leaves in Balaoan, La Union. FILE PHOTO

A simple but innovative (and therefore new to farmers) part of the process was to let the farmers sort the cured leaves (by grade) themselves right at the farm before packing them in bales.

The bales, left open, are then identified with tags corresponding to the farmer's name, origin, crop year and other relevant information and received at the processing plant without the need for resorting.

"(The) TIPP is a criterion of quality and adds value to the product. With this, we hope to put the Philippines back on the tobacco map," agronomist Ricardo Boettcher said.

Boettcher added that about 15 years ago, the Philippines was an important player in the international tobacco trade.

Saving the industry

But political and economic upheavals over the years have caused the country's tobacco export to decline and eventually "collapse" so that Philippine tobacco is nowadays just "for the domestic market."

He said Philip Morris, through its TIPP and farmer assistance programs, hopes to put new momentum to the Philippine tobacco industry.

Five years ago, Philip Morris also started transferring technology to local farmers through its affiliated suppliers.

Starting with only a few farmer-participants, the assistance program this crop year benefited almost 4,000 tobacco farmers in Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan and Isabela in northern Luzon and General Santos City in Mindanao.

By introducing better farming and curing techniques, the program has increased both farm yield and the farmers' net return by at least 17 percent, according to company data.

"Five years ago, I had only one hectare assisted by Philip Morris. Now, I have 275 contracted farms. The traditional farm (without technical assistance) had an average yield of 1,500 kilograms per hectare; with the new technology, the yield is about 2,200 to 2,500 kg per hectare," Robert Tria, Continental Leaf plant manager, said.

The Philippines produces an average of 71,117 metric tons of tobacco annually and is considered a significant exporter of Virginia and Burley tobacco to Europe and Asia. In 1998, the country's total tobacco production was valued at P2.4 billion. Annual average Philippine tobacco export is $25.6 million, according to 2000 data from the National Economic and Development Authority in the Ilocos.

Of the country's average annual production of tobacco, 44,430 MT or 62 percent comes from the Ilocos, valued at about P2.01 billion.

Some 1.2 million people, including over 40,000 farmers, from northern Luzon depend on the tobacco industry. The Ilocos produces 95.61 percent of the country's Virginia tobacco, 66.92 percent of the Burley tobacco and 24 percent of the native tobacco, the Neda adds.

'This is no way to treat OFWs!'

By Tonette Orejas
City of San Fernando

THE QUEUE at the Philippine Christmas Village or Paskuhan in the City of San Fernando in Pampanga at 7 a.m. one Tuesday in January stretched beyond a kilometer, formed by a single chain of more than 700 passport seekers.

"We were already 300 since last night," said Digna Manayang, 55, of Barangay Imelda in Cabanatuan City.

Like her and her son Alvin, many people had lined up since Monday night, asserting their spaces on the long queue by sleeping on rented chairs or on rented card boards and without anything on their heads except hats and newspapers to ward off the chill.

"*Di pa kami naghilamos, 'di pa nag-*toothbrush (We haven't washed our faces, we have yet to brush our teeth)," said a young woman, a singer bound for Japan, while castigating a security guard. The guard earlier allowed a male latecomer to enter the Paskuhan gate leading to the Department of Foreign Affairs regional consular office.

"This is no way to treat OFWs (overseas Filipino workers)!" the woman screamed.

After Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog, Central Luzon counts the third biggest population of OFWs in the country, reaching an estimated 100,000 last year, according to the regional Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

At the farthest end of the row, Gerry Salvador, 21, kept his cool although the line moved at an average of five meters per hour since the office opened at 8 a.m.

Salvador, who received a janitorial contract in Saudi Arabia, found consolation in the overcast sky. "On other days, it's scorching hot," he said.

He made waiting more bearable by chatting with other applicants.

On that Tuesday, every applicant's target—whether an OFW or a tourist—was to be issued a number card that indicated the date and time the consular office would help them.

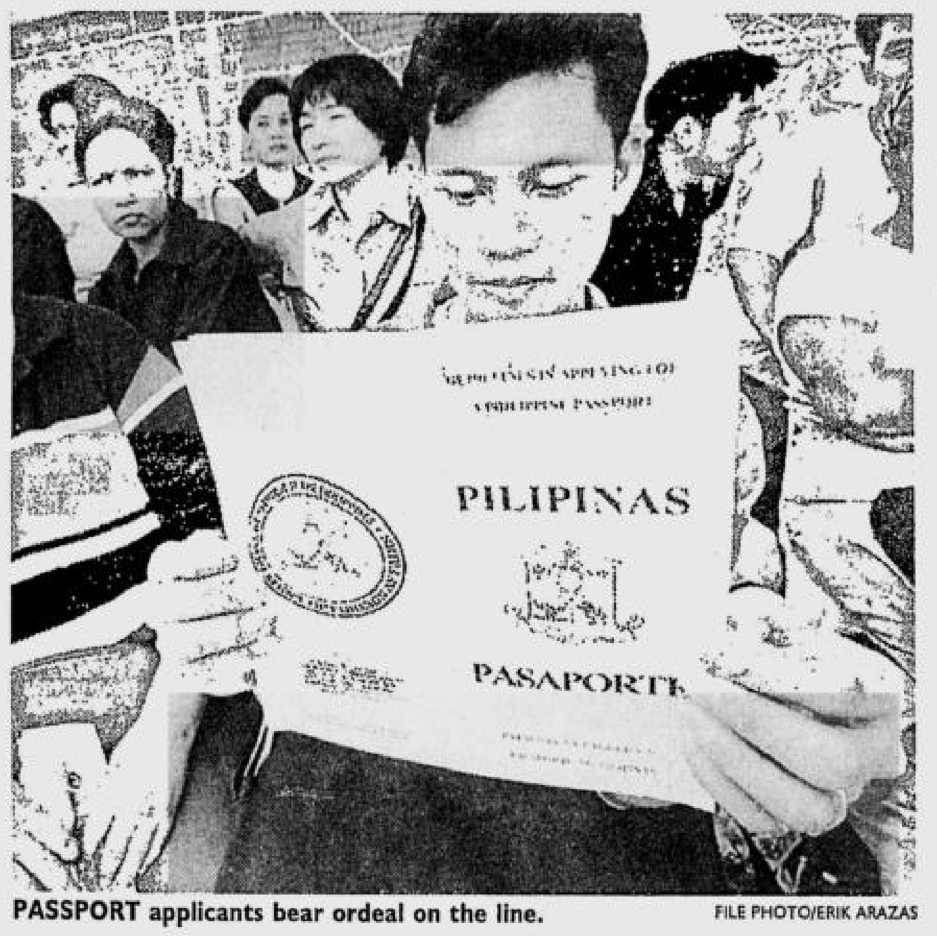
Number cards

The DFA has been issuing out 300 number cards daily since January, according to Elmer Cato, chief of the DFA regional consular office.

The department issues another set of number cards for those who have lined up but are unable to fall within that day's quota. By past noon, the queue is expected to be over and only those who have obtained the first set of cards could be served during the rest of the day. The rest are to come back on their designated schedules.

Elderly applicants are spared from lining up and are given immediate attention.

Cato, the former acting executive director of the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement, introduced the new system to end the applicants' complaints.



PASSPORT applicants bear ordeal on the line. FILE PHOTO/ERIK ARAZAS

He said his new job was more disconcerting than his former task of monitoring joint military exercises between Filipino and American soldiers.

He said the new system, although at first cumbersome, proved to be time saving to many passport seekers.

Patricia Alejandrino, 64, of Meycauayan, Bulacan, said the new scheme did away with the day of uncertain waiting. It used to be that applicants simply lined up without being issued the number cards, she recalled.

Alejandrino remembered clearly the punishing procedure. "Imagine coming here the night before then waiting the whole day then being turned away at past 4 p.m. because the office had already met the quota of 500 applicants," she said.

The unlucky ones try their chance again and come a night before the office opens.

"This number system is better because I know when and what time to exactly come. I don't have to come back and forth without assurance of any result," Alejandrino said.

Although the scheme worked well with Nelson de Leon, he wanted convenience and more expediency.

De Leon, a native of Hermosa, Bataan, and who is renewing his passport for a masonry job in Kuwait, is an "unwilling veteran" of many and long days of waiting.

"It still did not have to be this way because time is wasted. If you're an OFW whc has been away for most of the time, you'd rather spend your time with the family and not in lines where so many days are consumed," he explained.

Cato admitted that the Paskuhan, where the DFA has been a tenant since 1994, is not an appropriate venue.

The consular office has no seats for 300 or so applicants. Paskuhan, while charging an entrance fee of P30, which is good for 21 days, does not provide chairs either. It does not also have sufficient and clean toilets.

The ladies' room, for example, has only four cubicles where the toilets do not have running water.

"The office needs more personnel beyond the 15 people who are currently in place," Cato said. The limited staff was tl reason Cato reduced the daily quota from 500 to 300.

Doing away with the fixers was another headache, he noted. He agreed that the DFA was "duty-bound" to provide convenient and prompt service.

In fact, it has the financial resources to do so. Among 10 regional consular offices throughout the country, the DFA in Central Luzon was the top income earner last year, collecting P58 million from passport processing.

Where to transfer is the big problem right now. While Pampanga Gov. Manuel Lapid, Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez, San Fernando Mayor Reynaldo Aquino and the city council are stopping the DFA from leaving the city, they did not suggest assistance or an alternative site for the DFA office within the city.

These officials did not agree also to the proposal of the Clark Development Corp. to host the DFA office inside the Clark Special Economic Zone, 15 km north of San Fernando. They cited income opportunities to the Paskuhan and to the city as well.

Many of the applicants, who come from all over Central Luzon, did not want Clark because it is far.

A larger facility, according to Cato, is "direly necessary" to be able to accommodate the increasing number of applicants and to host the DFA's machine-readable passport project.

Accidental author's book a hit among OFWs

By Maurice Malanes
La Trinidad, Benguet

AFTER publishing her first inspirational book about her life as a pilgrim last year, an Igorot businesswoman-turned-author found that marketing a book in this country was not as easy as selling Benguet vegetables, which she used to trade.

But the entrepreneur in Apolonia "Pholie" Hidalgo-Cho found a promising market for her new book among overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong, where 17,000 Igorot women work mostly as maids.

Hidalgo-Cho, a native of Kibungan, Benguet, said she tried to consign a few copies of her inspirational book, "A Journey to Nirvana," to a niece who works in Hong Kong. The books were sold out and more and more overseas workers have since been ordering more copies.

Some overseas workers even called Hidalgo-Cho just to say how the book inspired them.

She declined to disclose how many copies she sold there. But she said the demand for her book from Filipino domestic helpers in Hong Kong alone has prompted her to consider publishing a second edition soon.

The author succeeded in tapping a big bookstore chain in Manila. But she found that OFWs in Hong Kong—who long to read anything about their home country, including Filipino comics—are buying her books at a far faster rate than here.

A Journey To Nirvana
Pholie Hidalgo-Cho
COVER of "A Journey to Nirvana."

Turning points

Hidalgo-Cho never dreamed of becoming a writer. But while in search of her Holy Grail in Israel in 1995, she met an accident that has changed her life, transforming the successful businesswoman into an author.

Together with her businessman-husband Sonny, she had busied herself recording items sold and computing profit gained from the family's vegetable buy-and-sell business.

The business grew and expanded into other ventures such as assembling passenger jeepneys. Hidalgo-Cho had thus pre-occupied herself with purely business activities related to her agricultural economics degree.

Quite successful materially, Hidalgo-Cho, barely 40 then, longed for spiritual enlightenment. She joined a pilgrimage to Israel, touring all the places—from Capernaum to Canaan—where Jesus Christ talked about the Kingdom of God more than 2000 years ago.

But the businesswoman's life took on a new twist of fate during the pilgrimage. She fell off an open space from the second floor of a hotel by the Dead Sea on Feb. 16, 1995.

Before joining her fellow pilgrims for an early morning swim, she decided to take a walk first. From her room, she proceeded to the right wing of the building where she presumed the stairs were located.

Soon enough, she spotted a door with an arrow sign on it. She opened it. The stairs were there.

The path was unlighted, but surrounding lights illuminated it well enough. On the left side of the stairs was a wall and beside it was an open space and, she presumed, a wall of glass that would check one from falling. She was wrong.

"In my excitement, I made a few steps toward that open space. But as I grasped with my left hand on the wall beside it and the open space with my right hand, the world suddenly stopped all around me," she said. "It was too late before I realized I walked into an emergency exit."

She had a bad fall. She tried to pick herself up, but she realized she was hurting badly. Her legs were in the wrong places.

"With difficulty, I was able to put back my right leg back in its proper place but was unsuccessful with the other," she recalled. "I was paralyzed from the waist down."

Holy Land

The account of the accident and what brought Hidalgo-Cho to what Christendom considers the Holy Land were among the contents of her book, "A Journey to Nirvana," which she wrote while recovering from two major surgical operations in her spine.

A rare book ever written by a Cordillera author, it "will surely inspire both disabled and physically normal people," Benguet Vice Gov. Edna Tabanda said. "The book is truly an example of the inner strength of a woman."

The 216-page book needs some fine-tuning such as translating into English some quotes and dialogues in the vernacular so that other readers can fully appreciate it. But Hidalgo-Cho's work no doubt is a priced gem in the Cordillera which has a rich oral tradition but where the printed word is lacking.

Edited by Benguet State University Prof. Rodolfo Abastilla and journalist Jimmy Laking, the book is not only about the triumph of the human spirit over physical and psychological suffering.

It is also a story of the human soul's search for nirvana or bliss, which, when found, transcends all the fleeting pleasure and pains of this world.

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YEAR 2002 COMMENCEMENT RITES

MANILA CAMPUS
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April 24, 2002 • 9:00 a.m.
PICC Plenary Hall

CALOOCAN CAMPUS
(Colleges of Business Administration, Arts and Sciences, Engineering and Fine Arts)
April 25, 2002 • 9:00 a.m.
PICC Plenary Hall

MANILA CAMPUS
(Graduate School, Colleges of Law and Dentistry)
April 26, 2002 • 3:00 p.m.
UE Theater

INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION and ASSOCIATE IN COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY
April 19, 2002 • 10:00 a.m.
UE Conference Hall

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS

Dr. SIXTO K. ROXAS
Manila Campus
PICC Plenary Hall

Mr. EDGARDO C. MANDA
Caloocan Campus
PICC Plenary Hall

Mrs. ANTONIETA F. IBE
Manila Campus
UE Theater

Engr. REYNALDO F. NOCUM
Institute of Technical Education and Associate in Computer Technology
UE Conference Hall

Dr. NILO L. ROSAS
Elementary and Secondary Laboratory Schools
UE Theater

GRADUATES WITH HONORS AND AWARDS

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(seated, l-r) **NOEL ANGELO L. IZAR, JERRY R. MANINANG,** *Cum Laude* graduates, College of Fine Arts; **DIANA M. TORRES, JENNIFER I. BUSTAMANTE, PHILIP S. SAYMO,** *Cum Laude* graduates, College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). (standing, l-r) **DOROTHY ANNE E. LIBOON,** *Cum Laude*; **ELSIELYN V. TESALONA,** *Cum Laude*; **DUCHESS MARIE B. CRUZ,** *Magna Cum Laude* and College Distinguished Graduate; **AILEEN C. MEDINA,** *Cum Laude*; **AGNES R. MARTINEZ,** *Magna Cum Laude*; **MARISSA O. MARTIN,** *Cum Laude*; **MARILEN A. SINGCA,** *Magna Cum Laude*, all from the College of Business Administration (CBA).

Caloocan Campus Graduates with Honors

MANILA CAMPUS:
(seated, l-r) **NORISSA L. LUCERO,** *Cum Laude*, College of Computer Studies and Systems (CCSS); **SHERYL S. FAUSTINO, MARY JOY T. UY, NERISSA A. PARAHINOG, MA. CECILIA S. DULAY,** *Cum Laude* graduates, CAS; **MA. RHODORA A. MALABAG,** *Magna Cum Laude*, CAS; **SORHAYA P. DILABAKUN, EMCEE O. IGAY, KANDICE NADEL D. PABINGUIT,** *Cum Laude* graduates, CAS. (standing, l-r) **CONNIE C. ONG,** College Distinguished Graduate, College of Dentistry; **CATHERINE G. ECHEVERRI,** *Cum Laude*, CCSS; **HEIDI R. SY,** *Magna Cum Laude*, CCSS; **ROMEL V. CORDOVEZ,** *Magna Cum Laude* and College Distinguished Graduate, CCSS; **CRISTOPHER A. DE JESUS, GENESIS S. MANALO,** *Cum Laude* graduates, CAS; **CELITO A. TAMBAN,** *Magna Cum Laude* and College Distinguished Graduate, CAS; **JONATHAN ANTHONY C. BROSULA,** *Cum Laude*, CAS; **MA. NENITA G. SOLDEVILLA,** *Cum Laude*, CCSS; **JOSE V. ONDA,** *Magna Cum Laude*, CCSS.

Manila Campus Graduates with Honors

Not in the Photos:
CAS Manila: **DARRYL C. CORPUZ,** *Magna Cum Laude*; **WINNIE C. GOY,** *Cum Laude*;
CBA Caloocan: **NANCY A. MAXINO,** *Magna Cum Laude*;
College of Engineering: **HOMER C. HULLEZA,** *Magna Cum Laude* and College Distinguished Graduate; **JIMMY B. ALMARIO, BJORN Q. BAQUIRAN, JANICE T. CRUZ, ROMMEL S. DELOS SANTOS,** *Cum Laude* graduates.

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The Fifty-fourth Annual Commencement Exercises of the Elementary and Secondary Laboratory Schools took place on April 12, 2002, 3:00 p.m. at the UE Theater.

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GenSan bombers trained by Malaysians, say cops

From page A1

Espina said investigators, who were "taking seriously" the Abu Sayyaf claim, did not rule out other groups could be behind the bombings.

He refused to comment on the possibility that the suspects were linked to Fathur Rohamn al-Ghozi, an Indonesian alleged bomb expert who was sentenced to 12 years in prison last week in General Santos for possession of explosives.

Al-Ghozi's arrest in Manila in January led to the discovery of a cache of explosives in General Santos.

Police say Al-Ghozi is a bomb expert for the Jemaah Islamiyah, a radical Muslim movement operating in the region with alleged links to the al-Qaida terror network of Osama bin Laden.

Reinforcement

Because of the bombings, hundreds of soldiers and policemen were sent yesterday to General Santos City.

Among the units sent to the city were three companies from the 6th Infantry Division and a Marine battalion.

"Our instructions were to heighten the visibility (of government troops) in the area to prevent future bombings," Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta Jr., Army spokesperson, said in Manila.

In General Santos, Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. ordered the reactivation of Civilian Volunteers' Organization.

As if on cue, the 777 Vigilante Group urged all Ilaga members to come out in the open and take part in carrying out retaliatory attacks on those responsible for the bombings. The Ilaga was a vigilante group used by the government against the Moro National Liberation Front in the 1970s.

The call of the 777 Vigilante Group was contained in a letter signed by a certain Commander Toothpick. The letter was read over the radio.

Abu Muslim Alghazie of the Abu Sayyaf, who claimed responsibility for Sunday's bombings, said he was not scared of Commander Toothpick's threat.

In a radio interview, Alghazie dared Toothpick to meet him face to face so that he could break him. Alghazie also scoffed at the government's effort to locate his group.

"How can the military identify me when its intelligence network is very weak," he said in Filipino.

The MNLF said the bombings "do not conform with the teachings of Prophet Mohammad as revealed in the Koran."

AFP

SUSPECTS in the General Santos City bombing, Maliquin Ampi and Bobby Sabilo are believed by police to be former Muslim separatist rebels who had been trained in bomb-making in Malaysia and part of a 10-man terrorist cell operating in the city.

"Killing innocent civilians is unIslamic and we strongly denounce this act of terrorism," the MNLF-Islamic Command Council said in a statement.

MNLF vs Abu Sayyaf

The MNLF-ICC then announced its war against Abu Sayyaf bandits yesterday.

"We will fight them because we cannot allow them to continue killing innocent civilians and terrorizing our people in the name of Islam," Abdullah "Diego" Sangcopan, MNLF-ICC chair, said.

Another MNLF-ICC official said Alghazie could be a mercenary working with people backing the holding of Balikatan exercises in Central Mindanao.

"Media should look into this probable angle so the people may know the real reason (Alghazie) is sowing in South Cotabato," the MNLF-ICC official said.

In Cotabato City, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said it was willing to help arrest other suspects in Sunday's bombings.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the government would have to write the rebel group. He said the MILF central committee was deeply concerned with the bombings as they might affect the Mindanao peace process.

To avoid complications in the negotiations between the government and the MILF, Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, Southern Command chief, urged the MILF to turn over suspects to the government should they seek refuge in MILF territory.

In the aftermath of the General Santos bombings, other major cities in Mindanao have had their share of bomb scares.

In Pagadian City and Zamboanga del Sur, text messages allegedly sent by Alghazie warned of explosions.

Col. Jet Velarmino, commander of the Army's 51st Infantry Battalion, said the military was not taking the text messages for granted. The military has deployed two K-9 dogs in Pagadian City.

In Cagayan de Oro City, malls and shopping centers have also deployed more security men to avert bombings. Even the state-owned National Power Corp. beefed up security for its substations in Mindanao.

Napocor spokesperson Rufino Magbanua admitted, however, that the move would not guarantee the safety of transmission lines in critical areas.

"The power stations are safe but transmission lines are vulnerable to sabotage," Magbanua said. In the past, armed groups targeted Napocor power lines, plunging Mindanao into darkness. ***Reports from AFP; Aquiles Z. Zonio, Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie S. Señase, Ayan C. Mellejor, Hernan P. de la Cruz and Joselle d.R. Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and Martin P. Marfil in Manila***

Black Hawks up: PAF pilots . . .

From page A1

me-down MG520s, the chance to fly Cobras and Black Hawks is a "dream come true," Ferrer said.

"Before, the pilots were limited to staring," Ferrer said in Filipino.

The last Filipino soldier to ride a Cobra was Air Force Col. Edgar Calvo, during last year's Balikatan. In the past two Balikatans, however, PAF pilots sat in the backseats. Last year, this part of the training led some pilots to air their disappointment.

The pilots have also included the attack choppers in their wish list, but Ferrer said he could not say if the aircraft would be purchased under the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

No jets

But helicopters are one thing, fighter jets are another. Ferrer said PAF pilots will not have the chance to fly the US Air Force's famous F-18s and Hornets, four of which are currently based here, the former US base, for the duration of Balikatan 02-2.

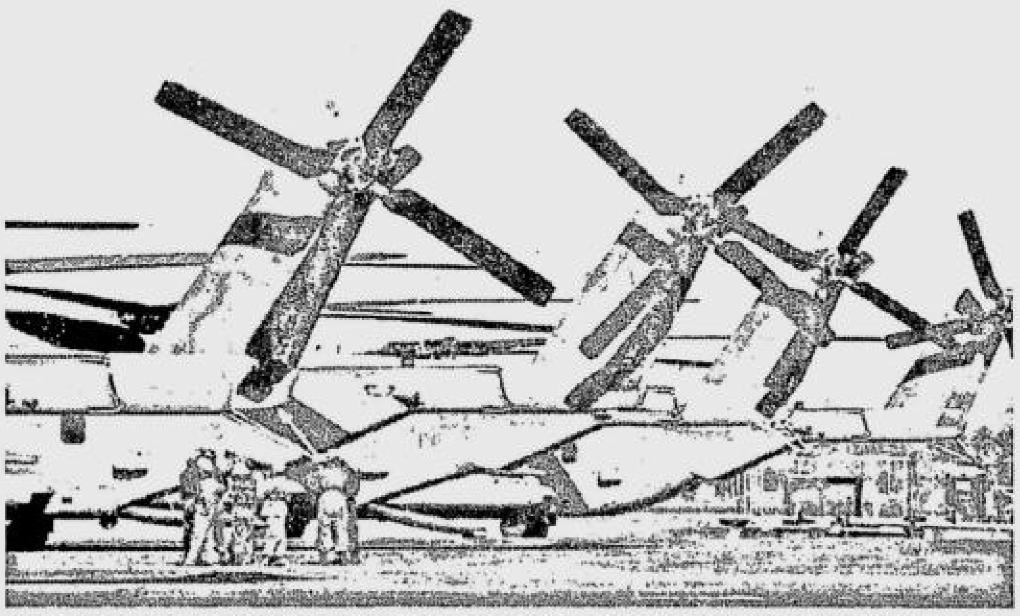
Flying these jets requires more "technical familiarization," he said, given their "complicated system." The country's pilots would have to make do with their Korean War-vintage F-5s, he added.

USAF pilots will be using the Crow Valley gunnery range in Capas, Tarlac, as part of the training exercise.

The United States used Cobra helicopters during the Gulf War in 1990-91 and recently in the counter-terrorism campaign "Operation Enduring Freedom" in Afghanistan.

The Black Hawk figured prominently during the ill-fated US mission to Mogadishu, Somalia, in 1993. A popular movie based on the mission, "Black Hawk Down," was released last year.

According to Ferrer, the days of being mere plain viewers and observers for PAF pilots are over, as every member of the wing present at the base will be "allowed to board and have a hands-on (experience)."



STATE-OF-THE-ART flying machines, the US Marines' CH-53 chopper gleams in sunny Clark, Pampanga.

DENNIS SABANGAN

Most of the wing's 100 or so members are deployed all over the country.

Noise pollution

The Balikatan activities up in the air have prompted residents in Iba, Zambales, to complain of noise pollution.

Residents of Barangay Palanginan said the loud noise frightened the children while farm animals were disturbed and were seen fleeing in different directions.

The planes were performing low-altitude maneuvers in the province yesterday.

Former Zambales Gov. Amor Deloso said "this was an old, old practice of American troops when they used to dominate (the air space) over the tranquil Zambales."

Deloso said that when he was still Botolan mayor in the early 1980s, there were at least three incidents of accidental bomb dropping in his town.

Fishermen in San Antonio town said their lives might be in danger if the fighter planes stage mock bombing exercises nearby. They said Capones Island, about three miles off the coast of Barangay Pundaquit in San Antonio, used to be the favorite target range of American troops.

In Nueva Ecija, the jungle warfare training program opened in Fort Magsaysay yesterday with 664 US Marines and 414 Filipino soldiers taking part. Protests, however, hounded the exercises. ***With reports from Cesar Villa and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

'GMA cares,' . . .

From page A1

A cutesy President Macapagal-Arroyo smiling as though all's right with the country is on all the project billboards of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

And the images come in two versions, urban and rural. The first shows her wearing a denim jumper and a farmer's hat. In her hand, she clutches a sheaf of rice stalks. The other shows her in a blue blouse against the seal of the Office of the President.

"GMA cares," the billboard trumpets.

Someone cares very much, indeed, for the President. Her pictures are up there on orders of Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong. DPWH Department Order No. 86 sets the form and measurements of the billboards and the presidential pictures to be used.

"We put it up as a proper acknowledgment of who is pushing the project for the people," Datumanong said in a telephone interview.

According to him, the idea for the project "did not come from the President, but among us members of the Cabinet."

He brushed aside criticisms that it was intended to constantly remind the people of the President's good works for the 2004 elections.

"It's not an election propaganda," said Datumanong, a former deputy speaker of the House of Representatives.

The slogan, "GMA cares," he said, was also the department's idea. "We coined it because when she supports a project, she really cares to follow it through to completion," he said.

Genuine interest

Assistant Secretary Salvador Pleyto, one of Datumanong's trusted officials, agreed, saying that in Cabinet meetings, the President shows genuine interest on the status of the project and its impact on the people.

"She values each infrastructure project, which she views as a means to help uplift people's standard of living and spur growth," said Pleyto, who also oversees the completion of the presidential bridges program.

Not to worry how much it will cost the taxpayer. Elizabeth Pilorin, head of the DPWH information office, assured the INQUIRER the project contractors will foot the bill for the billboard and the vinyl stickers.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER indicate that two firms that put up a bid for the glossy, weather-proof stickers—Gampik Construction and Development Inc. and Reflecto-sign Distributor—offered a price of P500 to P980 per sticker.

According to Pilorin, billboards with the President's name on them is nothing new with ousted President Estrada having his "Angat Pinoy 2004" and President Ramos his "Philippines 2000."

In Estrada's case, he said the former President even issued a memorandum for all heads of government agencies to put the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, 1999-2004 in their billboards.

Estrada and Ramos, however, did not have their mugs on the billboards.

Gunmen kill 3 Palestinians suspected as Israeli agents

From page A1

leader Yasser Arafat in his besieged headquarters in Ramallah, but no breakthrough was reported. Palestinian officials continued to accuse Israel of seeking to kill Arafat and set up a "puppet government."

The Israeli army maintains a tight encirclement of West Bank towns, but continues to lay siege to both Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Shooting erupted there again on Monday night (Bethlehem time). A Palestinian inside the church said Israelis had tossed a tear-gas grenade into the compound at the start of a gun battle, which caused no injuries. Also, 10 pro-Palestinian foreigners who joined Arafat at the start of the siege quit yesterday and faced deportation.

In the wake of the Israeli pullout, Palestinian Authority ministries were left in shambles. Israeli troops had gone through the offices, ripping out computer hard drives, seizing documents and trashing offices that were not related to Israel's search for militants, Palestinians said.

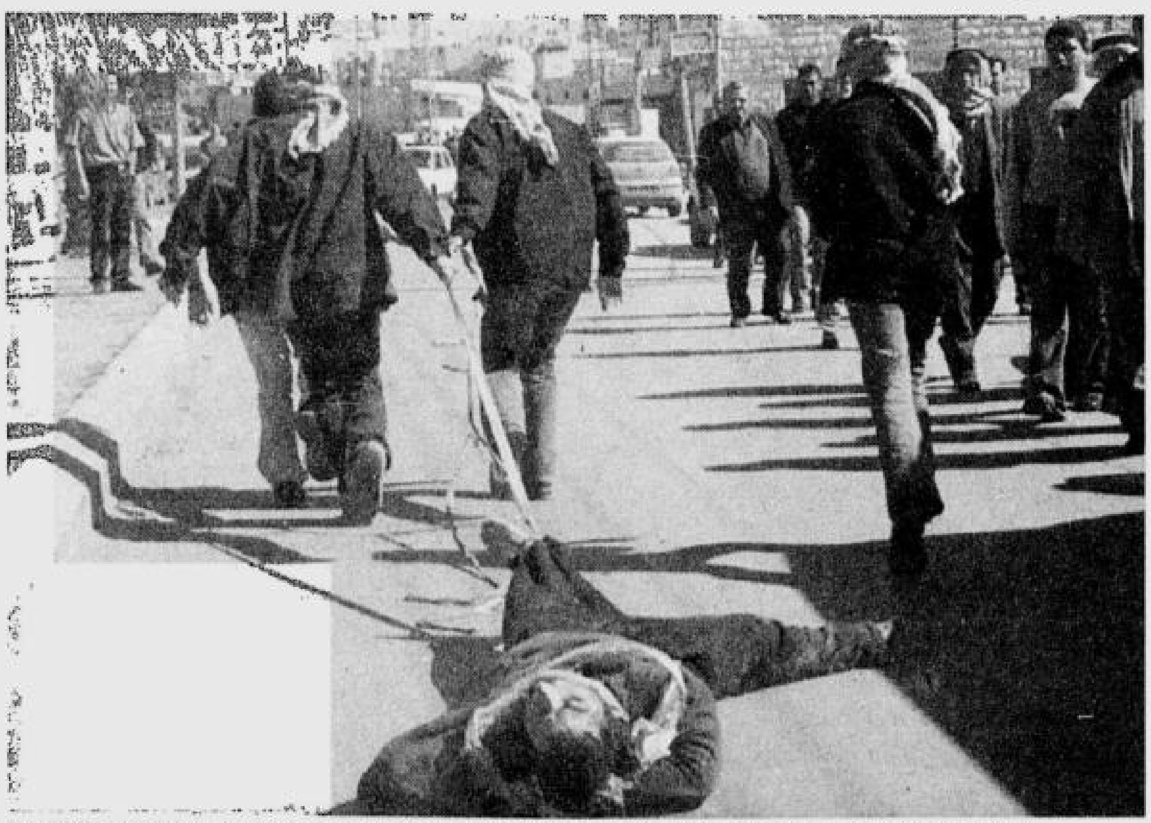
Israelis took medical records of thousands of patients from the Health Ministry, collected the student database from a computer at the Education Ministry and headed home with the car registration list from the Transportation Ministry, Palestinians said. The troops blew up a safe in the Education Ministry and made off with 40,000 shekels ($8,000) inside, said Salah Soubani, director of information at the Education Ministry, who was present when Israeli troops entered his building.

Mob violence

Hooded vigilantes shot the three alleged informers—Mohammed Dibassah, Zuhair al-Muhtesseb and Moussa Rjoub—and dumped their bound and gagged bodies in the same spot where a missile from an Israel helicopter gunship killed Marwan Zalloum, a commander of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades militia, in a targeted attack just hours before. The militia is a radical offshoot of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement.

The Hebron shooting and similar action in Ramallah on Monday reflected the disintegration of authority in the Palestinian areas following Israel's three-week incursion. Armed militias had relative freedom in the cities even before the incursion, and several dozen alleged informers have been killed by fellow Palestinians in the past 19 months of fighting with Israel.

In Hebron, a large crowd quickly gathered around the corpses lying in Salam Street. One of the bodies was strung up by one leg from an electricity pylon and stripped by the crowd down to his green underwear, his blood-soaked shirt pulled over his head to reveal deep cuts and bruises. Another body was strung up from a lamppost.



LAWLESSNESS in Hebron, West Bank, after the Israeli pullout: Three men suspected of collaborating with Israel as informers were killed by hooded men and their bodies put on public display.

REUTERS

People stuffed burning cigarettes in the bullet holes in the torso. Some kicked, spat and threw rocks at the corpses. The three men suffered multiple gunshot wounds in the head and body, with their hands tied behind their backs. Their limbs also appeared broken, though it was not clear whether the injuries were inflicted before or after they died.

Seven men in a car, all wearing woolen hoods or keffiyehs wrapped around their faces, claimed responsibility. The driver of the car, wearing a headband of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, told a reporter that the killings were in revenge for Zalloum's death. Zalloum's bodyguard also was killed in the Israeli missile attack.

"The fate of all collaborators will be like this," said the masked gunman before speeding away.

Thousands of people paraded past the bodies until a white municipal pickup truck came to take them away over three hours later.

The three victims had been arrested previously on charges of being part of Israel's extensive network of informers, Palestinian security officials said. They were taken from a Palestinian prison for the showcase revenge killing, though it was unclear who handed the prisoners over to the Al Aqsa Brigades.

The killing followed the public shooting on Monday of three more alleged collaborators in the main square of Ramallah, less than a mile away from Arafat's headquarters. A large crowd watched as they lay on the ground, writhing in pain. Bystanders tried to block approaching ambulances, but the three were eventually taken to a city hospital where one later died.

In New York City, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced the creation of a UN committee headed by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and including Sadako Ogata of Japan, former head of the UN refugee agency, and Cornelio Sammaruga, the Swiss former head of the International Red Cross.

Annan told reporters the team would start its work "without delay" and travel to the region as soon as possible.

The Israelis expressed reservations over the team—whose establishment was unanimously approved in a UN Security Council resolution Friday—saying it wished it had been consulted and that it "would have preferred the team to be made up of military specialists." ***With reports from Reuters, AP, AFP***

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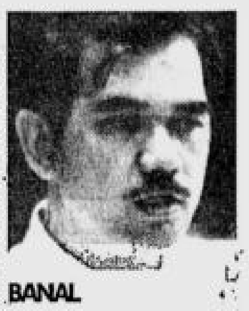
THREE - NINE MARKETING

PBL CHAIRMAN'S CUP

La Salle seeks lead vs Ateneo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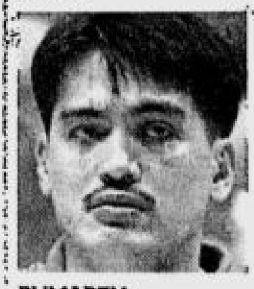

PUMAREN

By Dennis U. Eroa

FOR ICTSI-La Salle to snatch solo leadership in the PBL Chairman's Cup, it must hurdle a familiar and deadly rival today at the Makati Coliseum.

The Green Archers tackle the vastly improved Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation Blue Eagles at 6 p.m., after the 4 p.m. clash between Shark Energy Drink and Ana Freezers.

"This is going to be exciting. Ateneo is playing very well. Coach Banal's (Joel) triangle offense is working wonders," said ICTSI mentor Franz Pumaren.

A victory will enable the Archers (4-1) to seize the solo leadership. If Ateneo wins, the Blue Eagles (3-1) will force a two-way tie for the lead with Kutitap, whose mentor Koy happens to be Joel's younger brother.

This will also mark the first time that Ateneo and La Salle will collide after the memorable UAAP titular series won by the Archers at the Big Dome last year.

"This is an important gauge on how much our level of competition and maturity has improved. I expect my team's adrenalin to soar against the Archers," said coach Banal.

Aside from its triangle, Ateneo boasts of a fearsome inside game anchored on 6-foot-5 Enrico Villanueva, Paolo Bugia and Rich Alvarez. Wesley Gonzales is also playing spirited basketball as he joins Celino Cruz in orchestrating the Eagles' plays.

Gunner Magnum Membrere is fast proving to be a reliable man in offense, while Val Domingo, Jeff Anicete and Larry Fonacier can also deliver the telling blows.

Like Banal, Pumaren believes that defense will play a key role in determining the winner. "There is always drama and passion when La Salle meets Ateneo. While the manpower may be different, I believe that too much pride is at stake. We have to work harder to win," said Pumaren.

Mike Cortez anchors La Salle's tireless, full-court trapping game. Willy Wilson, Manny Ramos, Mark Magsumbol, Ronald Cuan, Francis Zamora and Adonis Sta. Maria will provide La Salle with the needed push.

STANDINGS	W	L
ICTSI-La Salle	4	1
Kutitap	4	1
John-O	4	2
Ateneo-Hapee	3	1
Ana Freezers	3	2
Blu Sun Power	2	3
Montaña	1	4
RP Team	0	3
Shark	0	4

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
4 p.m.—Shark Energy vs Ana Freezers
6 p.m.—Ateneo vs ICTSI-La Salle

Fil-Estate hosts tennis, swimming camps next month

THE FIL-ESTATE Sports Foundation Inc. (FESFI) will conduct tennis and swimming training camps next month.

FESFI chair Robert John L Sobrepeña said next month, the summer training programs for tennis and swimming are part of the foundation's unending commitment to help in the development of sports in the country.

"We have a good chance of excelling in tennis internationally. We now have results to back it up. This is definitely a step toward a long journey in bringing back the glory of Philippine sports," Sobrepeña said.

The Manila Southwoods Sports Club inside the sprawling Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club and Bramante Piazza (2nd Floor Renaissance Towers, Meralco Ave. Pasig City) will host the tennis camps.

Manny Tecson, a former World Group Davis Cup player, will conduct the training. Training fees are P2,500.00 (beginners) and P3,000.00 (intermediate).

Summer swimming lessons will be held also at the Manila Southwoods Sports Club. Training fees are P2500.00 for beginners and P3,000.00 for advacnce participants. Abet Alon-alon, a member of the Philippine National Team , will conduct the training.

Sponsors are CAP Philippines, RR Payumo + Partners, Camp John Hay, Bramante Piazza, Manila Southwoods Manor Hotel, Manila Southwoods Sports Club, Wilson Sports, Skycable, Splash Island and Accel.

For other details, call Len Gregorio or Chimes Placido at 638-2249.

Cebuana Lhuillier rips Casino CDO

By Roy Luarca

CEBU CITY—Cebuana Lhuillier's trapping defense caught Casino Cagayan de Oro by surprise Monday night as the Gems posted a 106-76 rout in the MBA First Conference at the Cebu Coliseum.

The 30-point difference was the biggest yet this year and it somehow eased the stigma of the 96-91 loss the Gems suffered in the hands of the RCPI Negros Slashers at the same venue on Saturday.

And, more important, it enabled the Gems to gain a share of the lead with the Slashers and the Olongapo Volunteers. They all carry 4-win, 1-loss slates.

"They were not able to solve our trap throughout. My boys really stuck to it," said Gems coach Francis Rodriguez, pointing out that their trapping defense led to 12 Blitz 3s or 36 points.

The Gems actually started slowly, even allowing the Amigos to post a 21-19 first quarter lead.

Bruce Dacia and Jercules Tangkay found their range, however, allowing the Gems to gain control by halftime, 69-54.

Ahead by 15 points at the end of the third quarter, the Gems never wavered to push back the Amigos to the cellar of the eight-team field with a 1-5 card.

Scores:

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 106—Dacia 28, Tangkay 20, Echavez 14, Lura 10, Padilla 5, Rodriguez 5, Quilban 4, De Jesus 3, Taguines 2, Lumantas 2, Solomon 2.

CASINO CDO 76—Calimag 16, Bughao 15, Manucat 13, Naron 11, Epondulan 8, Pimentel 6, Capus 3, Buenaventura 2, Sanz 2, Menor 0, Bravo 0, Lopez 0.

Quarters: 19-21, 47-36, 69-54, 106-76.

FIRST CONFERENCE
Standings

	W	L
RCPI Negros	4	1
C. Lhuillier	4	1
Olongapo	4	1
P. Davao	3	3
Osaka P'sinan	2	5
*Batangas	1	2
*Pampanga	1	4
Casino CDO	1	5

*Battling at presstime

GAME TOMORROW
(Mindanao Polytechnic)
6 p.m.—Negros vs Cagayan de Oro

Kaw keys AK-7 win

ALFONSO "Achit" Kaw scored a tournament-record 63 points to almost single-handedly carry AK-7 over RP-PCFBL 5 recently in the Architects, Contractors, Engineers and Suppliers basketball tournament at the Tanduay Gym in Quiapo. The sweet-shooting Kaw turned in a splendid 80 percent shooting, making 31 of his 40 attempts from the floor, to become the tourney's best offensive player ever. It was AK-7's first win in the tournament sponsored by Boysen Paints.

SPORTSWATCH

Williams sisters sued

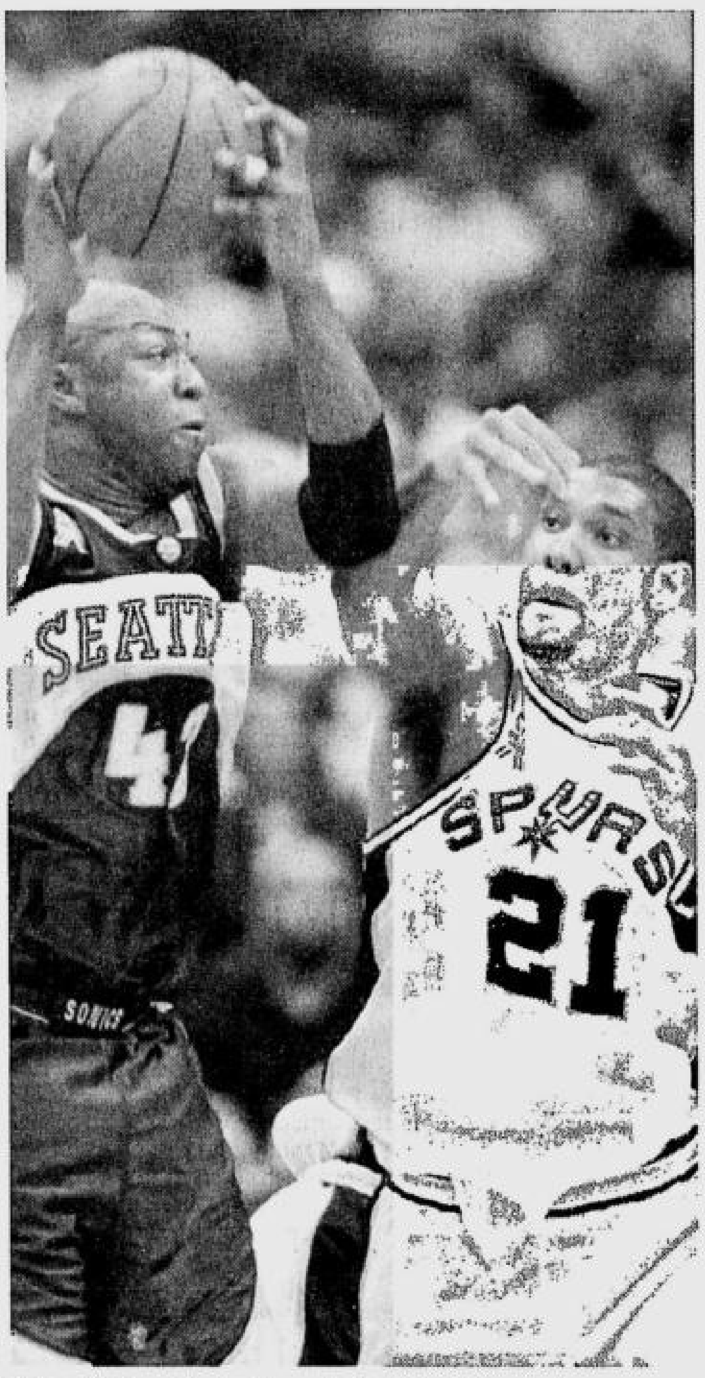
WEST PALM BEACH, Florida — Venus and Serena Williams are being sued for allegedly backing out of an agreement to play an exhibition match against John and Patrick McEnroe. Women's Sports Zone Inc. claims that potential profits from the match were estimated at $45 million and the company couldn't get started without those funds, the Web site's attorney, Abbey Kaplan, said Monday. The suit, filed Thursday in Palm Beach Circuit Court, claims the sisters' father, Richard, acted as their agent and signed a contract for the match, which was to be called "Battle of the Sexes II." The match was agreed to but never was scheduled, Kaplan said. *AP*

Balleber shines

VETERAN Edgar Balleber maintained his supremacy in the Milo/ SRAP squash circuit,beating Ricky Espinola, 9-7, 9-2, 9-6, in the recent second leg finals at the Makati Sports Club courts. Robert Garcia and Robert Bachmann shared the honors with Balleber by emerging as class B and C champions, respectively. Garcia crushed Samuel Als, 9-0, 9-2, 9-5, while Bachmann downed Christian Balahadia, 9-5, 5-9, 9-2, 9-6. Arnel Begornia, JR Garcia and Jun Lozano finished third in the open, B and C classes, respectively. Begornia routed Joboy Antipal, 9-2, 9-1, 9-7; Garcia subdued Ron Mallon, 10-9, 6-9, 9-1; and Lozano blasted Don Black, 9-1, 9-4, 9-2.

Sports ed Ma burial

THE REMAINS of Priscilia Santillan vda. De Antonio, mother of People's Journal Sports editor Jose S. Antonio, will be interred tomorrow, April 25, in San Roque, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. She was 73 and known as "Ima" among friends and relatives. Her body lies at the San Roque Chapel in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija.


SEATTLE SuperSonics forward Vin Baker (42) pulls down a rebound as San Antonio Spurs forward Tim Duncan (21) defends during the first quarter of their first-round playoff game in San Antonio yesterday. The Sonics won, 98-90. AP

New Jersey levels series with Indiana

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Jason Kidd had 20 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists Monday to lead the New Jersey Nets to a 95-79 win over the Indiana Pacers, leveling their best-of-five first-round series at one game each.

Facing an almost must-win situation after losing the home-court advantage with an 89-83 loss Saturday, the Nets had a lot of heroes.

Keith Van Horn scored 17, Kenyon Martin added 19 and backup center Aaron Williams added 15 for the Nets.

New Jersey's defense frustrated Indiana's Jermaine O'Neal, limiting him to 12 points on 3-of-11 shooting. He had 30 points in Game 1.

Reggie Miller led Pacers with 26 points, while Brad Miller and forward Ron Artest could only manage 10 and 4 points respectively.

It was New Jersey's first playoff win since beating the Knicks in overtime on May 4, 1994. The Nets have played only five postseason games since then.

The playoff series shifts to Indiana's Conseco Fieldhouse for Game 3 on Friday and Game 4, a week from Tuesday. If a fifth game is necessary, it would be played on May 2.

In San Antonio, Seattle used strong inside play from Vin Baker and Rashard Lewis to beat San Antonio 98-90 and even their best-of-five series at one game each. *AP*

Superio bucks Visayas rains

PALO, Leyte — Notwithstanding security reasons in Mindanao, the four-man crew of the island-hopping Nissan Exalta GS Superio has decided to push through with its plans to run through Mindanao in the 30-day, non-stop fourth Pan Philippine Marathon.

Juvy Catajoy, leader of the crew conferred with the group, consisted of Ike Borja, Lester Susi, and Andy Dysangco upon arrival here Monday and reached the decision to test the true worth of the Exalta by passing on the original route.

The car's odometer now stands at 18,128 kilometers after its ferry crossing in Sorsogon. It survived the rainy weather on its way to the Visayas.

With less than two weeks left before the end of the run, the crew is not taking chances as they try to finish the crucial stages in the Exalta's bid to shatter the 30,586 kilometer-record logged by the Sentra Series III seven years ago.

KGB golf slated

THE 112TH consecutive monthly tournament of the Kapisanan ng mga Golfers sa Brodkast will be held at the Peninsula Golf course within the Petron Refinery Compound in Limay, Bataan, on April 27. The tournament is supported by Taylor Made and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office with the round-trip ferry service provided by Mt. Samat Ferry Corp. and Skyland Brokerage Inc. For more details, please call the KGB Secretariat c/o Boots Urbanes, tel. 922-99-03 or 455-67-89.

Corinthian Gardens' Tan stars in Nokia Intervillage

CORINTHIAN Gardens got 40 points from Lucio Tan Jr. yesterday as it took the first round lead in the Nokia Intervillage Golf North tournament at the Manila Golf Club.

Corinthian Gardens led Philam Homes and Acropolis, respectively, heading into the final round of the North tournament sometime in June.

Also scoring for Corinthian Gardens in the 12-to-play, eight-to-count tournament, organized by Videocom in 1991 to promote fellowship among village golfers, were Hedy See (38), John Tan (38), Juanito Go (38), Andrew Ng (38), Stewart Go (37), Edgar See (34) and Paul Yap (32).

Johan See (32), Cholo Cayanga (32), Tito Lerma (28) and Joey Lerma (26) were the other members of the team out to deny Philamhomes a second straight victory in the North tournament of the event now sponsored by Nokia, the world leader in mobile communications.

Other sponsors of the event which resumes May 6 with the first round of the Nokia Intervillage South tournament (Parañaque, Muntinlupa and Las Piñas) are PLDT, Volvo, Alaxan, ICTSI, Mastercard, Misuno and 357 Boracay. Running fourth after the first round was White Plains (267), followed by La Vista (262), Don Enrique Heights (258), Ayala Heights (257), Filinvest I (247) and Xavierville (239).

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs, First Round – Orlando vs Charlotte, Game 2 at 8 a.m. (r – 3:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.) on ESPN

NBA Anthology - '87 Los Angeles Lakers (Drive For Five) at 2:30 p.m. on ESPN

TENNIS: Masters Series (Monte-Carlo) Highlights at 10:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Delariarte leads MA

By Jong Arcano

DELARIARTE

JEROME Delariarte took a positive step to his career yesterday when he fired a four-under-par 68 to lead the Manila Amateur Golf Championship at Wack Wack East.

The 23-year-old Delariarte sank a 30-foot birdie putt on the 11th en route to a 4-stroke margin over Marlon Dizon, ex-pro Dave Hernandez and Erwin Vinluan.

Had he not bogeyed 17 from the trap, Delariarte could have broken the course record.

Two other big names, Angelo Que and Tommy Manotoc, stood five strokes back at 73.

The rest of the seeds failed to match the torrid pace set by Delariarte, who was the only player from among the 40 starters to break par: SEA Games gold medalist Juvic Pagunsan had a wild round of 75, Cookie Lao a 78 and former national amateur titlist Artemio Murakami a 79.

"It's an important year for me since I'm set to make the big decision on whether to turn pro or not next year. The plan for this year is of course to make it to the Asian Games team but if I don't, I will just try to make myself competitive all year round," said Delariarte.

The tournament is sponsored by Northwest Airlines, Bridgestone/ Tourstage, Cleveland, Hogan, Adams, Never Compromise, Ogio, Kasco, Greg Norman Apparel, Discovery Suites and Le Soleil in Boracay.

Jungolfer Judson Eustaquio, the 14-year-old who led the Philippines to victory in Thailand's biggest jungolf event early this month, was among yesterday's surprise performers with a 76 that left him tied for 12th with three others.

Coca-Cola netfest registration ends at 4 p.m. today

REGISTRATION for the first Coca-Cola National Tennis Championships, a Group 1 event sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association, ends at 4 p.m. today.

International Tennis Federation (ITF) white badge referee Boy Leonora will conduct the draw on April 25 at 2 p.m. Entry fees are P300 (open) and P200 (juniors).

Players may contact Loida Mallare at the Philta office (526-6435 and 523-6415) and Randy Villanueva at the Tower Masonry (721-6379 and 722-6435).

The Coca-Cola National Tennis Championships, which will be held from April 27 to May 11 at the New Subic Bay International Tennis Center, is being sponsored by Chris Sports, PLDT, Prince, Wilson and Union Bank.

Events on tap are men's and women's open singles and doubles, and boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and unisex 10-under divisions.

Ho hurdles foes in Hilado Memorial Cup tennis

JOSHUA Tan Ho of Xavier School reached the second round of both the boys' 14-under and 12-under divisions yesterday in the Luis Hilado Memorial Cup Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Tan Ho defeated Gian Aguila, 6-4, 6-1, to advance against third seed Bryan Dayleg in the 14-under class. He later conquered Jonathan Murrell, 6-1, 6-0, to advance against Raymond Padigos in the 12-under category.

Also booking second-round slots in the 12-under division were Gerard Bergavera, Kaiser Verzo, Nino Alcantara, Patrick Arevalo, Mark Balce, Gerardo Narvaez, Paul Magaway, Jonel Elisis and Gerard Michael Ngo.

First-round winners in the boys' 16-under division were Irwin de Guzman over Christian Canlas, 6-0, 6-1; Laurence Magaway over JR Dimayuga, 3-6, 7-6 (1), 6-4; Michael Basco over Juan Felipe Mayor, 6-3, 6-0; Arithmetico Lim over Perene Alina, 6-2, 6-1; Kyle Dandan over Raine Vincent Gumban, 6-0, 6-0; and Boris Jan Chavez over Carlo Franco Navarro, 7-6 (4), 6-1.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1989, Arianne Cerdeña rolled 2372 pins to rule the 13th Philippine Women's Bowling Association International Invitational Championships at the Green Valley Country lanes in Pasig.

FedEx Express Tour starts May 30

AFTER a three-year hiatus, the cycling Tour was officially revived yesterday by the sport's new patron, Airfrieght 2100 Inc., licensee of Federal Express in the Philippines.

Airfreight 2100 Inc. also unveiled a five-year plan that will explore the grassroots and improve the country's standing in the international cycling scene.

The new Tour, dubbed the FedEx Express Tour, will kick off with a four-day Tour of Calabarzon from May 30 to June 2.

"We are excited about the opportunity to revive the sport of cycling through the FedEx Express Tour. Hopefully, we will move toward being a cycling powerhouse in Southeast Asia, in Asia and even in the world," said Bert Lina, chair of Airfreight 2100 Inc.

Lina added that the Tour will not only provide cyclists a "venue to sharpen their skills," but will also create a positive impact in society.

"It would be fitting that the Philippines' greatest road race will inspire all of us to put the Filipino race back on the road to greatness," said Lina, adding that cycling revives age-old traditions such as hard work and resiliency.

The Tour will also include innovations that will be implemented in the hopes of building on the success of the defunct Marlboro Tour, which ruled the annual summer event for 22 years.

"We will be putting in a few changes from the past Tour. But all of these will be done to ensure that every year, our cyclists will have an incentive to improve," said Lito Alvarez, president of Airfreight 2100 Inc. and organizer of the Tour of Calabarzon.

Among the innovations will be an added pot prize for any rider who will meet the required speed and time parks to be set by the Professional Cycling Association of the Philippines, which has been designated as race manager.

"Every year, we will raise the bar as far as those time and speed marks are concerned. That way, we ensure that every year, there will be an incentive for the cyclists to improve," said Alvarez.

Aside from over P1 million in prizes—the individual classification winner getting P50,000 and the team classification champion earning P200,000—FedEx will be earmarking a substantial amount as bonus to the rider who meets the required time and speed marks.

LINA

Sports agency

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DURING a recent public hearing on House Bill 2745 creating the Department of Youth and Sports, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit presented a position paper which supported "in principle" the DYS in order for it to handle the government's role of promoting sports nationwide.

"However, the POC chief said, "we also proposed either the retention/conversion of the PSC (Philippine Sports Commission) or the creation of the Philippine Sports Institute as a 'focused agency' to handle elite sports development similar to the defunct Project: Gintong Alay."

Essentially, Dayrit stressed, HB 2745 calls for the abolition of the PSC and all its assets, personnel and funds shall be transferred to the DYS. Still, the POC head explained, "We believe that this may only worsen the situation for sports as the DYS will then become a bigger bureaucracy and the Pagcor (Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.) remittances intended for the training and development of our national teams will then be shared by the other programs and activities of the DYS.

"The situation at present is difficult enough," added Dayrit, "with the NSAs (National Sports Associations) having to compete for attention and funds from the PSC, which has to cater to other programs, request for assistance and donations from government officials and other organizations. Our proposal is for this agency to retain the Pagcor remittances to be used exclusively for the training and development of our national athletes and for it to be mandated and tasked to promote sports excellence aimed at improving athletic performance in international competitions."

On his proposal to retain the PSC or create the Philippine Sports Institute, the POC head said either body should continue to be under the Office of the President or under the DYS, but "independently constituted to have its own charter, mandate and focuses only in developing excellence in sports for the purpose of producing medals in international competitions thereby bringing honors to the country, promoting international goodwill and enhancing national pride." It should have an experienced and credible "executive director" who is results oriented and tasked to deliver the gold.

According to Dayrit, failure in elite sports for example could lead to "national discontent" and possibly "international embarrassment" thus the need for specific government involvement through a "focused" government agency. He said elite sports development requires a fixed, adequate source of funds over a long-term basis in order to mold elite athletes into "international champions." The concept follows the Gintong Alay model which served (during the time of Presidential nephew Michael Keon) as a government agency focused on elite athletes. This "finishing school" for athletes proved its worth during the early eighties, producing the likes of Lydia de Vega, Isidro del Prado and Elma Muros, to name a few.

Spring Cooking Oil competes in KL

REIGNING national basketball champion Spring Cooking Oil flies to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Friday, April 26 to compete in the 10-team ABC champions' Cup set April 28 to May 5.

A high-leaping American, 6-foot-3 Geremy Robinson, and seven-time PBA Best Import Bobby Parks will banner the Cooking oil Experts in their quest for the prestigious Asian crown.

Other members of the team are Macario Torres, Joel Solis, Joel Co, Allan de Castro, Mario Reyes, Michael Buendia, Efren Garcia, Erwin Luna, Jasper Javier and Ricky Ricafuente.

Co-owned by national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Herbert de Jesus and coached by Tito Palma, Spring is also supported in the trip by Jerry Santiago's Unimex Intertrade, Alfa Laval Phils., Boy Raymundo's ER Enterprises, Liwayway Marketing's Oishi and Dean Lao's D & L Industries.

"The boys are well-prepared and determined to do well against their tough rivals from Asia and the Middle East," said Padilla.

The other ABC Champions' Cup contenders are Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Korea, Qatar, Malaysia, India, Bahrain and Syria.

Spring is bracketed with Saudi Arabia, HK, Lebanon and Korea.

This is the first time in three years that the Philippines will be represented in the tourney. Two RP squads—Beeper 150 and Pasig Pirates—competed in 1998 and 1999, respectively, both finishing eighth.

"We hope to do better this time," said coach Palma. His import, Robinson, carries impressive credentials.

SPORTSWATCH

Enervon national junior netfest set

THE PHILIPPINE Tennis Association will hold the Enervon National Juniors Tennis Challenge on April 29 to May at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Players may register at the Philta office or contact Loida Mallare at tel. no. 525-6434 and 523-6415 for details. Deadline of entry is on April 26 at 12 noon to be followed by the draw at 4 p.m. Events on tap in the Group I tournament are boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and unisex 10-under divisions. Double entries are accepted.

Lucky 13 to split P200,000 pot

THIRTEEN is a lucky number this time for those who netted two wins in the 2-cock elimination of the P1-M Galleros de Manila 5-Cock Derby at the Casino Filipino-Parañaque. The lucky 13 who will equally split the P200,000 cash prize are: AMK by Alex Marvin, Wynern JMDA Farm by Marlon Ayuste-Al Martija, Fly High Iriga by Mayor Manny Alfelor, SPC Battle of Champions by Boy delos Reyes, Gold Cup by William Go, San Juan Nepomuceno by Buddy Robregado, Kim by Marcing, Winning Time by lawyer Rudy Salud, Dulungan by Rene Adao, Stud Poker by Boy Santos, Square B, Zap Farm by Arnulfo Paz and Lans by Nelson Salvanera.

Caltex-Havoline sizzles at SVI

THE IMPRESSIVE debut of multi-titled Jody Coseteng and Oscar Aguilar in the SVI Subic Grand Prix signaled the comeback of Caltex-Havoline Racing Team in the local motorsports scene. Helping Coseteng and Aguilar achieve their victories were Autoplus, Vortex Gold,Globe Telecom and Allied Domeque. "We're very elated with the results achieved by our team. This proved the superiority of the Havoline Fully Synthetic Motor Oil in the circuit," said Paul Familara, Caltex Philippines category manager for Lubricants Sales and Marketing.

Pinoy Grandmasters eye Olympiad

CHESS grandmasters Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio and Bong Villamayor said yesterday they were looking forward to playing in the World Chess Olympiad set in Bled, Slovenia in October. The three GMs have yet to confirm their participation in the championship round of the National Chess Championship from April 27 to May 6 at the Penthouse (17th floor) of the All Asia Capital Center in Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. The National Chess Championship serves as the qualifying tournament for the 2002 Chess Olympiad, and the three GMs will be automatically included in the team if they choose not to play in the finals. However, they will have to relinquish their slots in the Olympiad should they opt to join the finals, which offers a hefty P150,000 cash prize to the champion.

Nierras, Paculaba Prisaa stars

CEBU CITY—Julius Felicisimo Nierras Jr. and Rosal Paculaba starred for Central Visayas yesterday even as six meet records were broken in the Prisaa National Championships on Monday. Nierras and Paculaba won one gold medal each for Central Visayas, saving the hosts from an embarrassing medal shutout.The victories came late for the Cebuanos, who struggled in the morning events. Nierras took the title in the premier 100-meter race in 11.1 seconds. "We really expected him to win the gold in the event because he showed a lot of promise during our time trials a week ago," said athletics coach Precing Capampangan. Nierras clocked 10.66 during the time trials.

Rafael S. Alas III / PDI Visayas Bureaus

Firefly Thunderbird leads NCA winners

SIX entries headed by by Cocker of the Year Firefly Thunderbird 8 of Ram Lopez and the pioneer Firefly Group and R&B Farm I of Rep. Claude Bautista scored three straight wins each late Monday night to lead the NCA 7-Cock Derby which enters its four-cock finals tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

Also with three points piece are Cat Stingers of Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco, Geran of Gerry Fevidal, Spencer Winslet of William Co and Mulawin Argem Coliseum of Frank Berin and Rep. Rudy Albano.

With 2-1/2 point and within striking distance is Clear Cut of Pampanga's Madlambayan brothers.

ESPN covers NBA playoffs

SINGAPORE—After the 82-game long haul of the regular season, it's time for the best 16 teams in the NBA to put their playoff faces. Much to the delight of cable subscribers, ESPN STAR Sports returns in the Philippines to deliver the most comprehensive coverage of the NBA Playoffs and Finals on ESPN and STAR Sports channels.

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Lunas new RP flyweight champion

ROLLY Lunas defeated veteran Melvin Magramo via a unanimous decision to capture the Philippine flyweight crown recently at the Convention Center in Panique, Tarlac. Lunas knocked Magramo down with a straight to the head in the third round of the scheduled 12-round fight. But Magramo managed to stay in the bout despite continued punishment from Lunas.

LOTTO 6/42

16 26 17 4 15 32 Luzon

18 34 3 32 28 5 Vis / Min

SIX DIGIT

5 4 2 1 8 9

(in exact order)

San Miguel shocks Talk N Text, forces KO match

By June Navarro

GAME TOMORROW (Philsports) :
6 p.m.—Alaska vs FedEx

SAN Miguel Beer caught Talk N Text on its worst night and registered a 79-70 victory last night to force a rubber match in the quarterfinals of the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

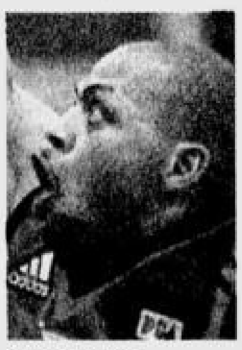
Refusing to be taken out of the semifinal picture outright, the Beermen hit a big third-quarter run before shackling the Phone Pals in the last 10 minutes.

Mario Bennett, Lamont Strothers, Dorian Pena and Robert Duat made their presence felt as the Beermen converted a deadlock at 49 to an imposing 62-52 spread going into the final period.

Stunned, the Phone Pals never got back on their feet and watched the Beermen finish them off with razor-like precision fastbreak plays.

Bennett threw his weight inside the paint, coming up with 22 points, 10 rebounds and five assists as the Beermen forced a do-or-die encounter on Sunday.

BENNETT



STROTHERS

By shaming the Phone Pals, the Beermen also escaped the ignominy of being eliminated from the quarterfinals for the first time since the 1999 All-Filipino Cup.

The Phone Pals are now in danger of bowing out of the quarterfinals for the second straight Governors Cup despite emerging as the top team in the quarterfinals.

"We know that Talk N Text is one of the best offensive teams in the league. For sure, we cannot outscore them so what we did was to limit their offense by applying a smothering defense," said San Miguel Beer interim coach Siot Tanquincen.

Gerald Honeycutt, who normally registers a triple-double on a hot night, was a shadow of his usual fiery form as he found it hard to operate inside the paint.

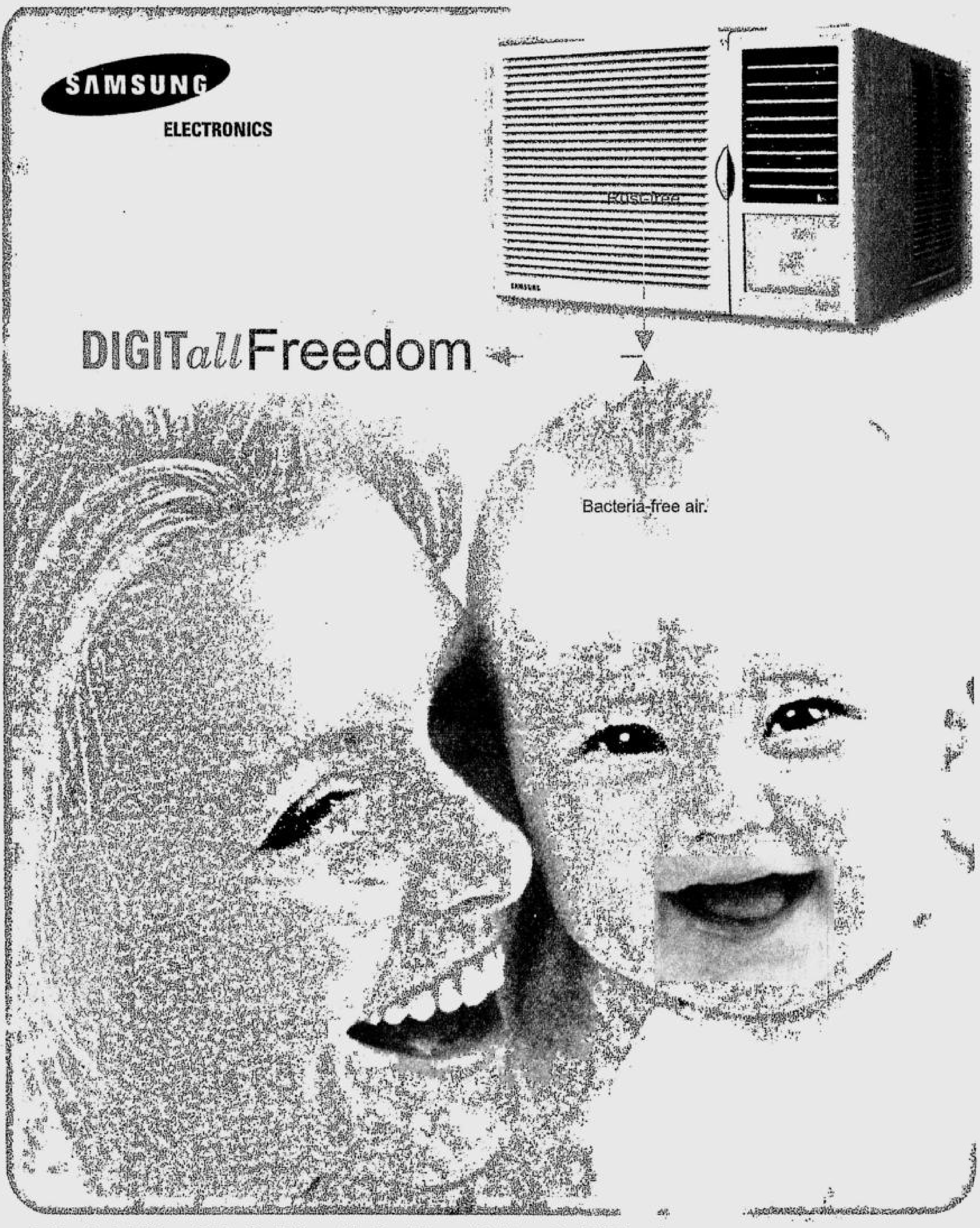
Richie Frahm, Victor Pablo, Kenny Evans and Mark Telan were also stone cold in the final half, allowing the Beermen to operate like a well-oiled machine on the offensive end.

Scores:

SAN MIGUEL 79—Bennett 22, Peña 18, Strothers 17, Duat 8, Victoria 5, Mente 4, Lago 3, Belasco 2, Gamboa 0, Castro 0.

TALK N TEXT 70—Honeycutt 22, Frahm 12, Telan 12, Evans 10, Ejercito 5, Crisano 3, Pablo 3, Lago 3, Gonzales 0

Quarters: 27-19; 39-40; 62-52; 79-70.



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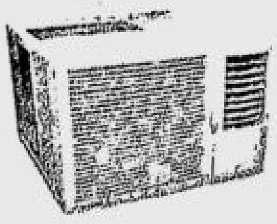

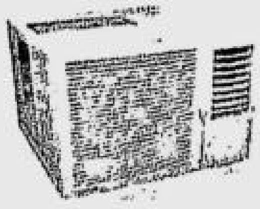

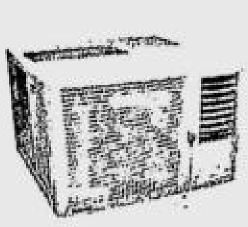

■ Dads back Atienza vs Cha-cha /A26
■ Bare Eye: Here's why poor, little people run berserk /A26

■ Nayon closure to uproot workers, trees /A27

'WPP men abused others'

Program director joked about rape complaint, says victim

By Jerome Aning

THE WOMAN who accused Witness Protection Program security guard Gerry Lintan of raping her while she was in his protective custody said yesterday that she knows of many other cases where witnesses and their families suffered sexual harassment and other abuses from their supposed protectors.

The 29-year-old housewife challenged other witnesses to come out and reveal the abuses they had suffered in the hands of WPP security men and officers.

Speaking in Filipino in a news conference at the Holiday Inn Manila, the housewife said Lintan, also known as Rustom Yap, had told her that none of the witnesses who entered the program escaped their demands.

"*Lahat ng pumasok dito na* witness, *hindi nakakaligtas*," she quoted Lintan as saying when she first entered the WPP last year.

In a two-page affidavit filed with the Commission on Human Rights on April 9, she accused Lintan of raping her on March 26 in an apartment where she, another witness, and their families were being housed.

Between sobs, she said she "felt insulted and frustrated" when she went to WPP chief Leo Dacera III to report the rape, and he doubted her complaint.

She said Dacera joked about her case and even tried to make her admit that she and Lintan had a relationship.

She said Dacera had also threatened to tell her husband about the rape, and warned her that she and Lintan would be exposed in a scandal and their spouses could sue them for adultery.

She said she left the WPP on April 2 after Dacer failed to act immediately on her complaint. She also denied that she was already out of the protection program when she was raped, as alleged by a spokesman of the Department of Justice.

The WPP is under the DOJ.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez on Monday suspended Lintan from the WPP pending the results of the investigation of the National Bureau of Investigation. Perez also ruled out a pardon or a lighter penalty for Lintan. "If there is rape, it can't be forgotten," Perez said.

He had also ordered Dacer to subject all WPP guards to greater scrutiny.

"They must pass a test showing that they can be trusted with the lives of the witnesses," he said.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday ordered bureau agents to locate Lintan, who had been re-assigned to the Cordillera region.

Lintan's accuser showed reporters a certification Dacer had signed, which stated that she had been discharged from the WPP as of April 1. She said her lawyer has a standing motion for reconsideration of the order.

WPP MEN/ A26

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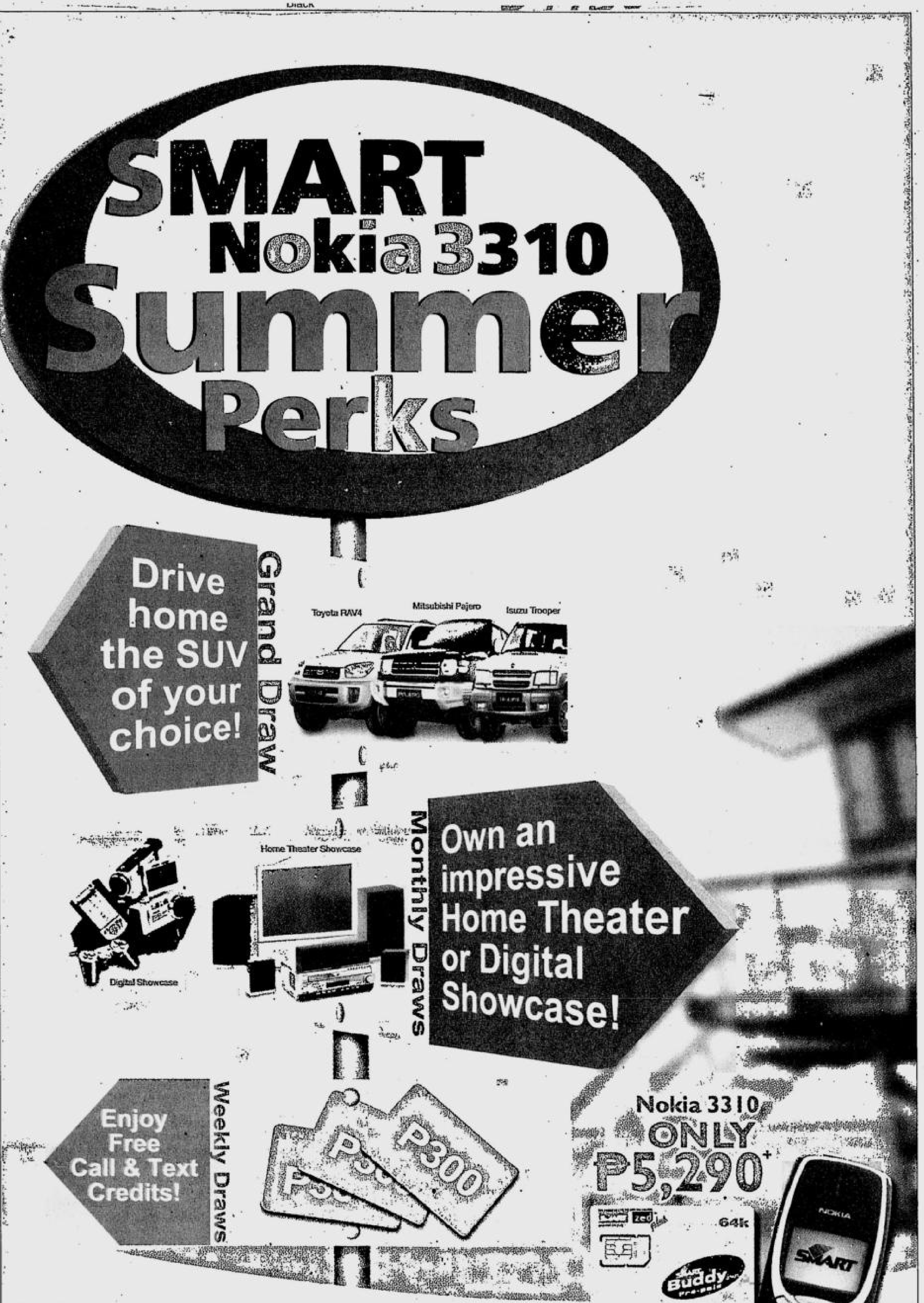

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23		500
30		500
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14		500
21		500
28		500
June 4	P300 worth of call and text credit	500
11		500
18		500
25		500
July 2		500

Monthly Draws

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
May 7	Home Theater* or Digital** Showcase	1
June 4	Home Theater* or Digital** Showcase	1
July 2	Home Theater* or Digital** Showcase	1

Grand Draw

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
July 2	SUV of your choice***	1

*Home Theater Showcase: Philips 127 cm. (50") Projection TV and Pioneer HTZ 77 Home Theater (DVD, VCD, and CD-capable) with MP3 Player and 5.1 speaker system
**Digital Showcase: DCR-TRV30 Sony Video Camera, Compaq iPAQ, Canon A10 Digital Still Camera, and a Sony Playstation 2
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CALTEX What Drives You

Dads back Atienza vs Cha-cha

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA City Council yesterday adopted the stand of Mayor Lito Atienza and passed a resolution rejecting any move to amend the Constitution.

The councilors also voted unanimously to back former President Joseph Estrada's request to be allowed to go to the United States for a medical checkup.

The debate over the two national issues dominated the council's session. The aldermen even voted to suspend the rules so they could discuss the two resolutions.

Councilor Ma. Asuncion Fugoso, one of two sponsors of the first resolution, said changing the Charter is "not feasible," considering the present economic situation of the country.

"There are numerous problems encountered by the country that should first be attended to," she said. "The debate on cha-cha (charter change) will complicate our present situation and further divide the nation."

The third district councilor also said those interested in amending the Charter may be "politically motivated and self-serving."

She added that "cha-cha" would be too costly and the money to be spent will be put to better use in supporting poverty alleviation programs.

But in an interview after the session, Fugoso said many councilors who voted for the resolution "do want cha-cha, but not now."

She said the councilors want the amendments to be made through a constitutional convention, instead of through a constituent assembly which some congressmen are advocating.

Five councilors, four of them members of the opposition, voted against the resolution. One of them, Councilor Bernardito Ang, even remarked: "Only fools don't change."

Ang and others opposed to the measure, argued that amending the Charter is timely and may help solve the economic problems the country is facing.

The sponsor of the second resolution, minority floor leader Don Ramon Bagatsing, said Estrada is a former head of state and should be given the best medical treatment available to him.

The councilor reminded his colleagues that the former president was once a Manila resident too, having been born and raised in Tondo.

Bagatsing said the government does not have to worry because Estrada has repeatedly given his word that he will return to the country and face the charges against him in the Sandiganbayan as soon as he has received medical treatment for his knees in the US.

In a phone interview, Bagatsing said the resolution should not be regarded as trying to influence the Sandiganbayan, before which Estrada's request is pending.

Korean painter strangled

A 74-YEAR-OLD South Korean artistic painter was found strangled inside his apartment room in Ermita, Manila on Monday, police said.

Yung Il-lee, a native of Seoul, South Korea, was found in Room 26 of the Elena Apartments on Salas Street about 1:15 p.m. Monday, police said. The victim was tied to a chair and an electric cord was looped tightly around his neck.

Yung's friend Park Jung-ho went to the apartment after Yung failed to make it to an appointment last Sunday in Laguna. Park said Yung also failed to reply to his phone calls.

SPO1 Steve Casimiro said Yung's room was in disarray. The police have not determined if anything had been stolen.

Investigators were also looking into the testimony of apartment janitor Jerry Rimando, 32, who claimed he usually saw Yung in the company of a young man. *Jerome Aning*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, April 24, 2002
4th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 12:24—13:5
Gospel: Jn 12:44-50

Jesus had said, and even cried out, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I am not the one to condemn him; for I have come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me, and does not receive my word, already has a judge: the very word I have spoken will condemn him on the last day.

For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has instructed me in what to say and how to speak. I know that his commandment is eternal life, and that is why the message I give, I give as the Father instructed me."

Commentary

John continues to present the issue of acceptance or rejection of Jesus. His interest in this theme suggests it was a big question for the first Christians. God's Messiah had been rejected and put to death by the leaders of his own people. And he continued to be seen as insignificant by many. Why? How were so many distinguished and learned people so blind? John concludes this section with a dramatic cry from Jesus, asserting that he is indeed the One sent by God, the light of the world. Let's not be too quick to think this all happened in the past. If we believe Jesus came from God, then we are faced with what he said: "I am with you still in people who are hungry, thirsty, naked or sick, strangers or prisoners." (Mt 25) It's just as easy to be blind now as it was then.

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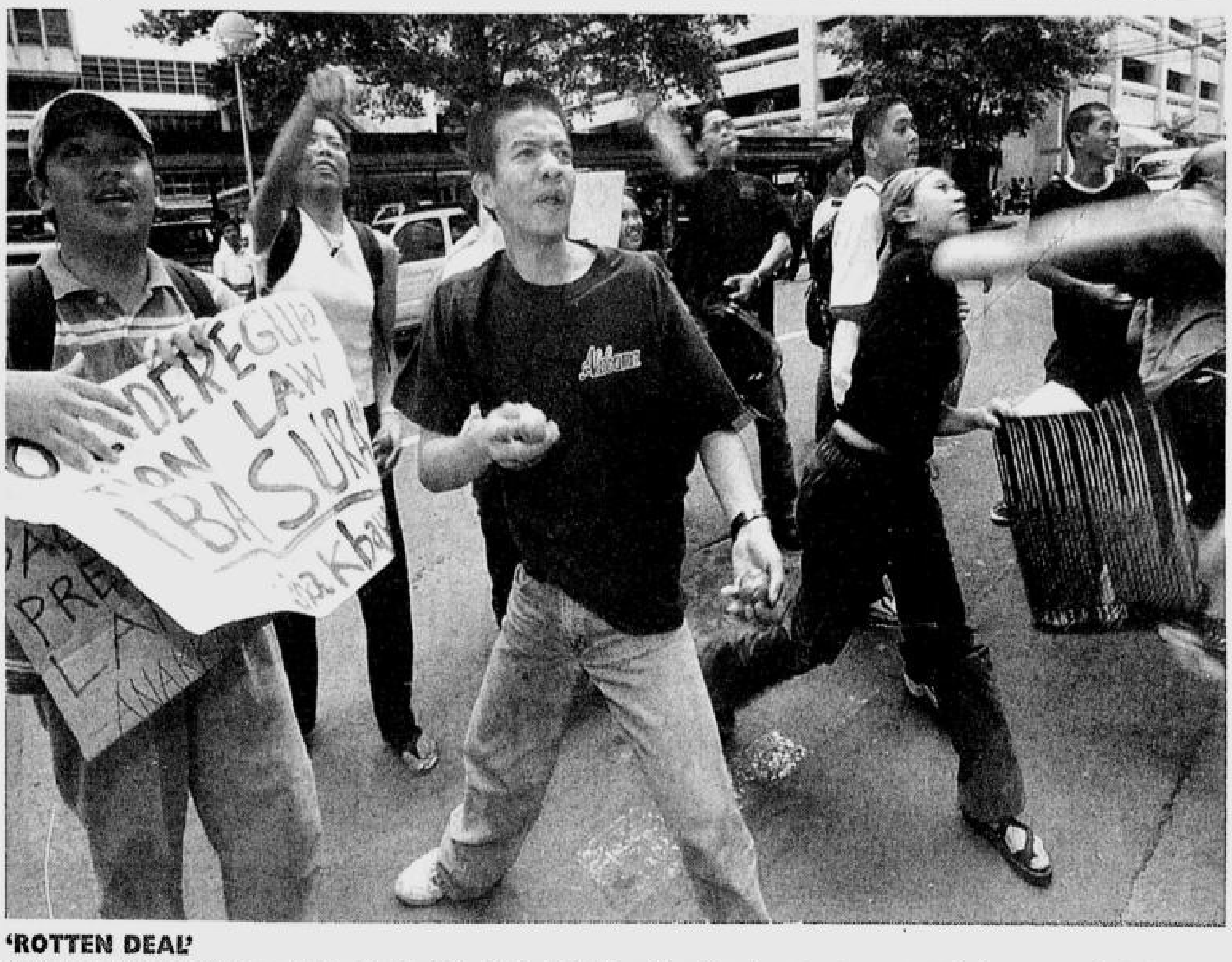
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (TORTS AND DAMAGES)—Moral damages— Moral damages are not punitive in nature but are designed to compensate and alleviate in some way the physical suffering, mental anguish, fright, serious anxiety, besmirched reputation, wounded feelings, moral shock, social humiliation, and similar injury unjustly caused to a person. Although incapable of pecuniary computation, moral damages, nevertheless, must somehow by proportional to and in approximation of the suffering inflicted. Such damages, to be recoverable, must be the proximate result of a wrongful act or omission the factual basis for which is satisfactorily established by the aggrieved party. However, it must be emphasized that "moral damages are not intended to enrich a plaintiff at the expense of the defendant. Such damages are awarded only to enable the injured party to obtain means, diversion or amusement that will serve to obviate the moral suffering he has undergone, by reason of the defendant's culpable action. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, Flores v. Uy, G. R. No. 121492, October 26, 2001].

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA



'ROTTEN DEAL'
Members of the Anakbayan pelt the Shell building in Makati City with rotten tomatoes to protest the latest round of price increase that the oil giant is carrying out.
ERIK ARAZAS

'Predators' attacking RP, labor groups say

THE "CLEAR and present danger" that the Philippines is facing is not caused by terrorists but by unfair trade that has caused the death of many local industries and the displacement of thousands of workers and farmers.

This warning was made by several labor groups that marched yesterday to Malacañang to ask the government to take a firm stand against what they called the attacks on Philippine products and industries both in the international and local markets.

"The government, particularly President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, should wake up to the reality that the country is under siege, and that our country is being pillaged by pirates and predators roaming the rough and unpredictable waters of globalization," lawyer Ernesto Arellano of the National Confederation of Labor said in a statement.

He said Philippine products are blocked in the international market, while imports are dumped uncontrollably in the local market, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs in local industries.

"If this is what globalization is all about, then we should get out of it," Arellano said in the joint statement.

The groups cited the recent imposition of a 45 percent punitive tariff on Philippine cement entering the Taiwanese market, even if Philippine cement only has a negligible share of four percent of the cement market in Taiwan.

They also cited the cases of Philippine fruit and tuna exports to Australia and Europe being subjected to high tariffs and barred by various non-tariff barriers.

In an open letter to the President, the workers called for the immediate suspension of all tariff reductions on imported products that directly compete with local products until after safeguard measures and safety nets are firmly in place.

"It takes political will to retaliate, but many government officials and policymakers would rather capitulate," Carlito Rallistan of the Association of Democratic Labor Organization said in their statement.

The Philippine Cement Workers Council pressed for the immediate resignation of the top officials of the Tariff Commission whom they accused of irregularities in denying the petition of the local cement industry for safeguards against the flood of imported cement.

"The officials of the TC, particularly Commissioner Edgardo Abon, should resign in disgrace," the groups said.

Here's why poor, little people run berserk

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HOW much does P8,000 mean to you? Maybe not much.

To a greedy, potbellied traffic cop, it could be the day's loot.

To a corrupt, non-performing barangay chair, it could be the month's support for a *querida* in another town.

The sum could, in fact, be peanuts to overfed traditional politicians whose porky ways have made them the envy of those who worship in the temple of greed.

But to majority of the hungry, jobless horde out there, P8,000 could spell the difference between life and death.

* * *

Such is the case with one young motor shop helper who nearly lost his life fighting for that sum of money.

No, he didn't try to pick the wallet of a jeepney passenger.

Neither did he grab the bag of a woman employee.

The sum this poor worker has been trying to collect formed the unpaid four-month salary from a motor shop where he had worked.

Diomedes Sibulan, 30, a native of Sorsogon, was on the phone yesterday. He said he got my number from a friend who did an odd job fixing our shower and the kitchen faucet.

Sibulan said he was supposed to earn P2,000 a month working as a shop hand at PDY Motors on Marlo Drive in Montevista Park, Cainta, Rizal.

The shop had its regular line of clients. But Sibulan said he left the place last October after his employer, a certain Elpidio la Torre, refused to pay him for two successive months.

The shop owner claimed he was losing money.

* * *

The poor unpaid worker quit last October. But, after his former boss pleaded with him, Sibulan said he returned to his old job last January with the hope that he would finally be paid the old P4,000 balance.

He indeed got an initial sum in his first month back, but his employer again failed to pay him for two successive months.

That brought the total balance to P8,000 or four months of unpaid labor.

Sibulan said he finally realized he was going nowhere. So he decided to quit for good.

He has since joined the Manalang Motors in Angono where he's paid the old rate of P2,000 a month.

At least he's getting paid regularly at Manalang.

* * *

Sibulan claimed he was ready to forget everything about his former employer in Cainta.

Until his mother wrote him from Ginlaon, Sorsogon to beg for help.

The old lady, with failing sight, needed an immediate eye operation.

Rat-poor, Sibulan could not make both ends meet with what he currently earns.

So what did the poor fellow do in a bid to help his sick mother?

Naturally, he went back to his old employer to claim what he had rightfully earned: the unpaid P8,000 salary.

He was routinely driven away.

In another bold bid at collecting, Sibulan alleged that the eldest son of his old employer manhandled him.

He said he nearly lost his life after his head banged on the concrete floor after being punched.

* * *

"*Sinaktan na po ako duon, pero kailangan ko ang pera dahil sa sakit ng aking ina,*" he mumbled over the phone.

Sibulan, at first, wondered if I knew of a lawyer who could help him.

But in the same breath, he altogether gave up the idea of going to court to collect his old salary.

You see, these petty matters are normally settled in the barangay level.

In fact, Sibulan said, he had sought the help of barangay authorities in Sto. Niño, Cainta, site of his old work place.

He said the barangay leader instead warned that he could end up being sued if he persisted in collecting his old salary.

* * *

As could be expected, no government agency is charged to assist poor little people whose rights predictably get trampled by moneyed tyrants.

No problem. With the help of friends, we could readily raise the P8,000 to help Sibulan and his sick mother.

Sibulan has, however, agreed to come out in the open and denounce his oppressors.

He seems hopeful that concerned authorities would one day go out of their way and start helping curb this form of injustice.

Let's hope this exploited worker is not mistaken.

At least, he has not yet joined the NPA.

'WPP men abused others'

From page A25

In her April 9 affidavit, the woman said Lintan raped her on March 26 as she was about to wash her 4-year-old daughter's feeding bottle. She said Lintan tried to rape her again two days later, but he did not succeed because she was able to grab a kitchen knife to defend herself.

She, her husband and their daughter moved to a small apartment after the incidents.

On April 19, she sought the help of the Volunteers Against Crime (VACC).

In a joint statement, the VACC, the Equal Justice Movement, Gabriela and the newly formed Witness Assistance Program Foundation yesterday demanded the relief of Dacera for not acting quickly on the woman's complaint.

VACC chair Dante Jimenez, E-Just chair Leonardo de Vera and WAP chair Mary Ong said Dacera could be charged with obstruction of justice. Administratively, Dacera can also be charged with grave misconduct as a public official, they said.

"The case has opened a can of worms at the WPP where dubious on-goings simply slide away unattended under Dacera," the groups said in their statement.

The housewife was a witness to the murder of a relative in 2000. During the trial, she claimed that three men abducted and threatened her, then left her in Tarlac.

Gabriela deputy secretary general Emmi de Jesus commended the housewife's courage to speak out and expose the incident.

The WAP Foundation, headed by former Ilocos Sur governor Chavit Singson and Ong, a former police agent, has taken charge of the housewife.

Singson, who was elected WAP chair in absentia, even gave on the spot a P100,000 donation for the program's starting operation.

"We know how difficult (is) the life of a witness," Ong and Singson said.

Singson testified against former President Joseph Estrada during his impeachment trial. Ong was a witness in the criminal cases against Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

De Vera said he believes the housewife's story is just the "tip of the iceberg" in the WPP irregularities.

He said they would ask for a "complete revamp" of the WPP and for the DOJ to make an inventory of the cases filed by witnesses against WPP guards and officials.

Senate majority leader Loren Legarda called for a more thorough investigation of the housewife's alleged rape.

Legarda urged the DOJ to "do everything in its power to get to the bottom of this case."

Nayon closure to uproot workers, trees

By Christian V. Esguerra

IT'S FINAL: The Nayong Pilipino will be demolished on May 5 to give way to the airport terminal 3 project.

The demolition is expected to uproot thousands of decades-old trees, displace around 60 employees, and put the theme park's future in limbo, according to Nayon executive director Charito Planas.

First to be demolished will be the Mindanao and Visayas regions, according to Planas.

Airport and Nayon authorities are set to sign this morning a memorandum of agreement allowing the Manila International Airport Authority to turn a key portion of the park into an internal access road and a parallel taxiway for the new Terminal 3, Planas yesterday told a forum in Pasay City.

Under the agreement, MIAA initially will pay Nayon P50 million of the P500-million compensation package for use of the theme park's 8.6 hectares, according to Planas.

The balance will be paid by 2004, she said.

She said the initial payment would not be enough for the redevelopment of Nayon, which is supposed to be reopened next year.

"That's why we would like to appeal to the President to ensure that Nayon will not be moved to another location," she said.

The initial payment will be for the compensation of employees and for proposals aimed at luring businessmen into investing in the theme park, she added.

She said airport officials had been floating the idea of moving the theme park to a reclamation area in Pasay or in other sites near the city.

"Right now, we don't have enough money for the redevelopment of the park," Planas said. "Definitely, we can't afford new land."

The plan, designed by University of Santo Tomas architecture students Karen Cheung and Jason Buensalido, will cost around P450 million, according to her.

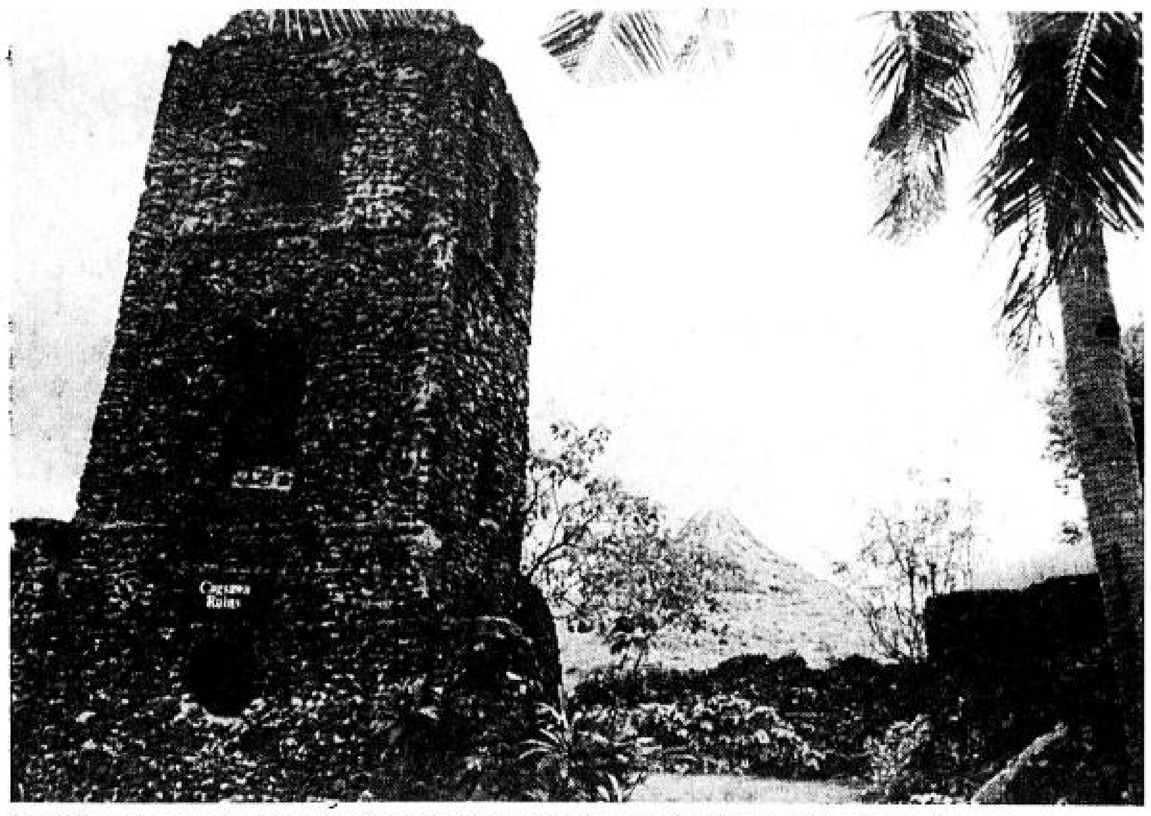
It aims to provide visitors with an "interactive experience" of the theme park as they tour the area on board "mobile nipa huts" and "cable cars," Buensalido said.

The plan might even go to waste if there would not be enough money for the park's redevelopment, Planas said.

She said MIAA officials had proposed to take over the remaining 38 hectares of Nayon for the construction of a cargo terminal.

She said she and other Nayon officials vehemently rejected the proposal since it would mean that the theme park would have to be relocated or, worse, closed permanently.

"They already got 8.6 hectares, now they want to get the entire park," Planas said.



RUINS replica in the Bicol section of Nayong Pilipino will itself be in ruins when the complex is closed down.

FILE PHOTO

Munti wants total rehab of shaky viaduct

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE ALABANG viaduct in Muntinlupa may be falling apart.

Although its operator, the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC), said the viaduct is in no immediate danger of collapse, city government officials are taking no chances and have called on the PNCC yesterday to rehabilitate the structure "to avoid accidents."

"The viaduct (may) not go as far as falling down, but we can't say what will happen in case of an earthquake," city engineer Vic Navarro yesterday told the INQUIRER.

Built in 1978, the 24-year-old 1.125-kilometer viaduct may be past its prime, since bridges usually last for only 15 to 20 years, according to Navarro.

"The structural soundness of the viaduct is questionable," he said. "We have been receiving a lot of complaints that it has been vibrating, shaking. I myself experienced that."

A Department of Public Works and Highways report dated Feb. 12, 2001 showed that "signs of cracks ... were evident" in the girders supporting the viaduct's pavement.

The report, which was prepared by engineers Susan Domanais, Blesilda Ramos, and Virginia Damaso of the DPWH Bridges Division, recommended the "constant monitoring of cracks to verify (their) possible progress," pending the rehabilitation of the viaduct.

Navarro said there hardly has been any improvement in the viaduct since the report. In fact, small debris have been falling from the elevated structure, he added, citing reports by the Muntinlupa Traffic and Enforcement Discipline.

Che Che Perez, head of the PNCC corporate communication department, yesterday said the entire stretch of the viaduct will be closed from 11 p.m. today to 4 a.m. Thursday for "load testing."

Two trucks with a combined weight of 80 tons will cross the viaduct to enable the PNCC to "assess the soundness of the structure," she said.

Trucks weighing over 20 tons have been long banned from the viaduct amid fears that the structure might collapse.

On Aug. 30 last year, the Muntinlupa City council approved a resolution asking Congress to investigate the "structural worthiness" of the viaduct, since the PNCC has "continued to disregard" dialogues and public hearings set by the local government.

Navarro said the city engineer's office cannot take charge of the viaduct's repair since it is operated by the PNCC.

Robles, 50

CONRADO Robles Jr., brother of ABS-CBN news deskperson Vicky Robles, died last Sunday at the age of 50.

He left behind his mother Leovigilda and brothers and sisters Bing and Lynda, Lulu, Nory, Cora, Marian and Boy, Violy, Roger and Sally, Roel and Cathy, Thess, Niña, Vicky and Lie.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Chapels in Quezon City. Burial is on Saturday afternoon at the South Cemetery.

Learn English, mayor tells Marikina folk

MARIKINA Mayor Maria Lourdes Fernando is urging local school officials to intensify the teaching of English to all high school and grade school students in the city to make it more competitive.

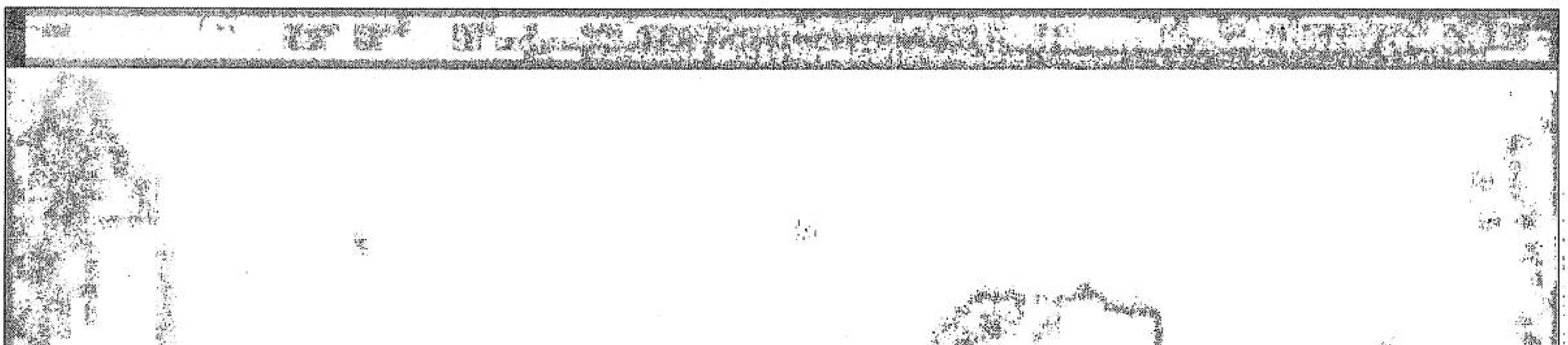
Fernando said that since the city is striving to be globally competitive, its residents must know how to speak English. She said Marikina residents should "learn English to understand the world and for the world to understand Marikeños."

She pointed out that English is used in the city's dealings with foreign investors, among others.

Under the city's English program, elementary and high school students would be encouraged to speak English but, Fernando stressed, they would not be dissuaded from using Filipino in every day life.

She said the program is also in line with the education department's campaign to make Filipinos master both English and Filipino.

The city's speak-English program would be implemented in Marikina's 17 public elementary schools and five high schools. ***Nelson F. Flores***



Recline. Relax. And read about life's ups and downs.
We've got everything on the changing economy, labor forces and market issues.
Not to mention most of the country's businessmen who listen to what we have to say.
BUSINESS INQUIRER

'BEFORE NIGHT FALLS'

Gay writer's story told with dignity, reverence

By Emmie G. Velarde

REVIEW

DIRECTOR Julian Schnabel says he's more than proud of this, his second movie.

"I'm bathed in it, I can't get out of it," he gushes. And it's been over a year since "Before Night Falls" was first exhibited in US theaters.

These are exactly my sentiments and, I daresay, those of a movie buddy, who also writes for a living. Coming out of the cinema, I asked if she has ever felt so matter-of-life-and-death over any story she had done. The quick reply: "No."

I took that as, "No, because not everyone, not even every writer, is gifted with the same circumstances, emotions, and facility of expression as Reinaldo Arenas was."

"Before Night Falls" has been listed by Premiere Magazine among the top 10 movies of 2000, with "Almost Famous," "Erin Brockovich," "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," "Wonder Boys," and "Traffic."

Hopefully, this movie about Reinaldo Arenas, the late gay Cuban poet and novelist, has been moved to Glorietta 4, for those who may benefit from watching an exemplary film. Which means, everybody. Previous exposure to the celebrated Cuban's work is not a requirement.

Homage and vision

Arenas, widely acknowledged today as one of his homeland's most important writers ever, lived a life so eventful and so intense that the mere telling of it is hypnotic. Through a not-so-random selection of his prose incorporated in the movie, it is made clear how passionate he felt about such a life.

To begin with, he found "absolute freedom" in his family's "absolute poverty." Freedom was to be his constant muse and navigator. Naturally, Schnabel points out, the movie and the memoir on which it is based, separately or together, is "a homage to, and transcendent vision of, freedom."

Reinaldo Arenas repeatedly risked personal safety to break free—of his family's parochial mindset, of tyranny by traditional society, of prison walls, of limitations to his art, of leaders that he esteemed until they threatened to curb his spirit.

The young Reinaldo was abandoned by his father, and then despised by his peasant-grandfather for his non-peasant way with words. As a teenager, Reinaldo was drawn to the romantic notion of Fidel Castro's revolution. He ran away at 15 to join rebels against the dictator Fulgencio Batista, only to be later persecuted for his homosexuality by the very comrades that he sought.

Reverence

Schnabel relates Reinaldo's story with nothing less than reverence. He never once apologizes for the "gay-ness;" instead, he presents it as the wellspring from which the poet's elevating sensitivity is drawn. This aspect of Reinaldo's personality is illustrated as vital but not overwhelming, in fact, only as impetus for the man's more noble callings—as visionary, literary icon, patriot.

Schnabel seems to say that Arenas' feminine side was what made him truly complete and equal to his destiny.

Himself a visual artist of considerable renown, Schnabel ponders: "There are things that Reinaldo speaks to in me, that summon up responses." He's saying he couldn't help doing the movie.

The director learned about Arenas only via a documentary on Cuban exiles in the United States. Simulated in the full-length feature, the docu segment about the poet sufficiently explains the attraction. At that stage in his life, Arenas was still plucky even while acting like a fish out of water. Without the chaos of his country as backdrop, his life had become too quiet.

UNFORGETTABLE. Javier Bardem as Reinaldo Arenas

Covenant

Digging deeper into his new subject, Schnabel found "a real palette" bigger than his more intimate first film, "Basquiat," the bio-pic of a friend, controversial '80s artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. The connecting thread, if one were needed, is that Arenas was devoted to his art to the point of delirium. He had to write, as though the gift were something he had been sworn to nurture and protect. This covenant was parallel to everything else that was happening to him. The world could turn to dust, and still he would be writing.

Flashback to the milieu in which Reinaldo's despair and genius thrived: As a university student, he was introduced to the growing community of homosexuals in Havana. As he explored this whole new world, he started seriously writing. In the mid-'60s, when the regime openly persecuted homosexuals, his work was pronounced as anti-revolutionary. Kept from publishing, he had to smuggle out manuscripts. (One book published in Paris was cited as best foreign language novel in France the year it came out.)

Squalor

In the early '70s, a petty argument on the beach led to four years in prison. Still he found a way to write, until a subsequent attempt to smuggle out another finished manuscript was thwarted, and he was tortured into renouncing his work. He was released in 1976, and was allowed to leave Cuba four years later.

Reinaldo's port of entry was Florida, but he settled in New York with Lazaro Gomez Carriles, fellow gay and exile. Practically living in squalor, Reinaldo wrote more furiously than ever, until he was diagnosed with AIDS in 1987. "Before Night Falls" was dictated to the faithful Lazaro.

Arenas killed himself three years later with an overdose of drugs and alcohol. In the movie it is dramatized as assisted suicide—more pointedly, ultimate death by a plastic bag that says, "I love New York."

In 1993, "Before Night Falls" was published and named one of America's top 10 books that year.

In making the movie version, it wasn't enough for Schnabel that components meticulously brought together through his artistic sensibilities (screenplay, music, visual maneuvers, etcetera) would ensure that the subject matter was projected fittingly well on the big screen. He also had to assemble the perfect company of actors for the movie, including Hollywood mavericks Sean Penn and Johnny Depp, who appear in startling cameos.

The viewer needs to be very attentive to catch Penn, who wears a mouthful of gold teeth for the scene that takes less than two minutes. He is gone before half the cinema audience can realize exactly what is happening, or exactly who *that* is. Depp is somewhat easier to put a finger on, with two roles that, at first glance, couldn't be more disparate—one a cross-dressing inmate, another a prison warden. But eventually it becomes apparent that both are the anal type, in vastly different ways (to see is to believe).

Unforgettable

Javier Bardem, no stranger to gay roles, sets his sights higher and delivers an unforgettable portrayal of Reinaldo Arenas. His performance may yet be proven as an authentic case of possession, mercilessly sustained for the duration of the film's making.

In Bardem's hands, the late poet-novelist is resurrected in dignity, despite flailing fingers, subtly swaying hips, and eyes that function like guided missiles in search of worthy male bodies. No one, but no one, is likely to delete from memory this brilliant actor's face *and* form, as the cross-starred Arenas.

Do yourself a favor, catch this movie—or demand an extension run. In the very least, "Before Night Falls" can teach a confused populace how to spot worthy subjects for protracted mourning.

Cocoy hopes Guy will grace his first major solo show in 27 years

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

SINCE his performance at the Araneta Coliseum in 1975, **Cocoy Laurel** has not had a major concert.

In 1998, he shared the stage with his erstwhile screen partner **Nora Aunor** in her solo concert also at the Big Dome. Nora's other former leading men, **Christopher de Leon** and **Tirso Cruz III**, also performed with her in the show.

But after earning raves for playing The Engineer in the West End and Sydney productions of "Miss Saigon," Cocoy has been raring to perform onstage again.

The son of former Vice President **Salvador "Doy" Laurel** and **Celia Diaz-Laurel** says he was inspired to do a solo concert after hearing a priest's homily one Sunday.

"I was attending Mass with my mom and there was this man who was singing beautifully and I felt a yearning to sing again," Cocoy shares. "Before the Mass ended, the priest said, 'If you're gifted with a beautiful voice, you have to use it for His glory.' That sort of hit me."

Cocoy wanted to have a thanksgiving show "to thank God for all the wonderful blessings that came to me without me asking for them," he says.

He was studying in Madrid when film director **Cirio Santiago** called him up and asked him to be Nora's leading man in "Lollipops and Roses," which would be filmed in the United States.

"I never expected it," Cocoy says of his big screen debut. "That movie led to several other projects. I did 'Till Death Do Us Part' with **Hilda (Koronel)**. Then I teamed up with Nora again in 'Burong Talangka' and 'Impossible Dream.' I've been so blessed. This concert is my way of giving back."

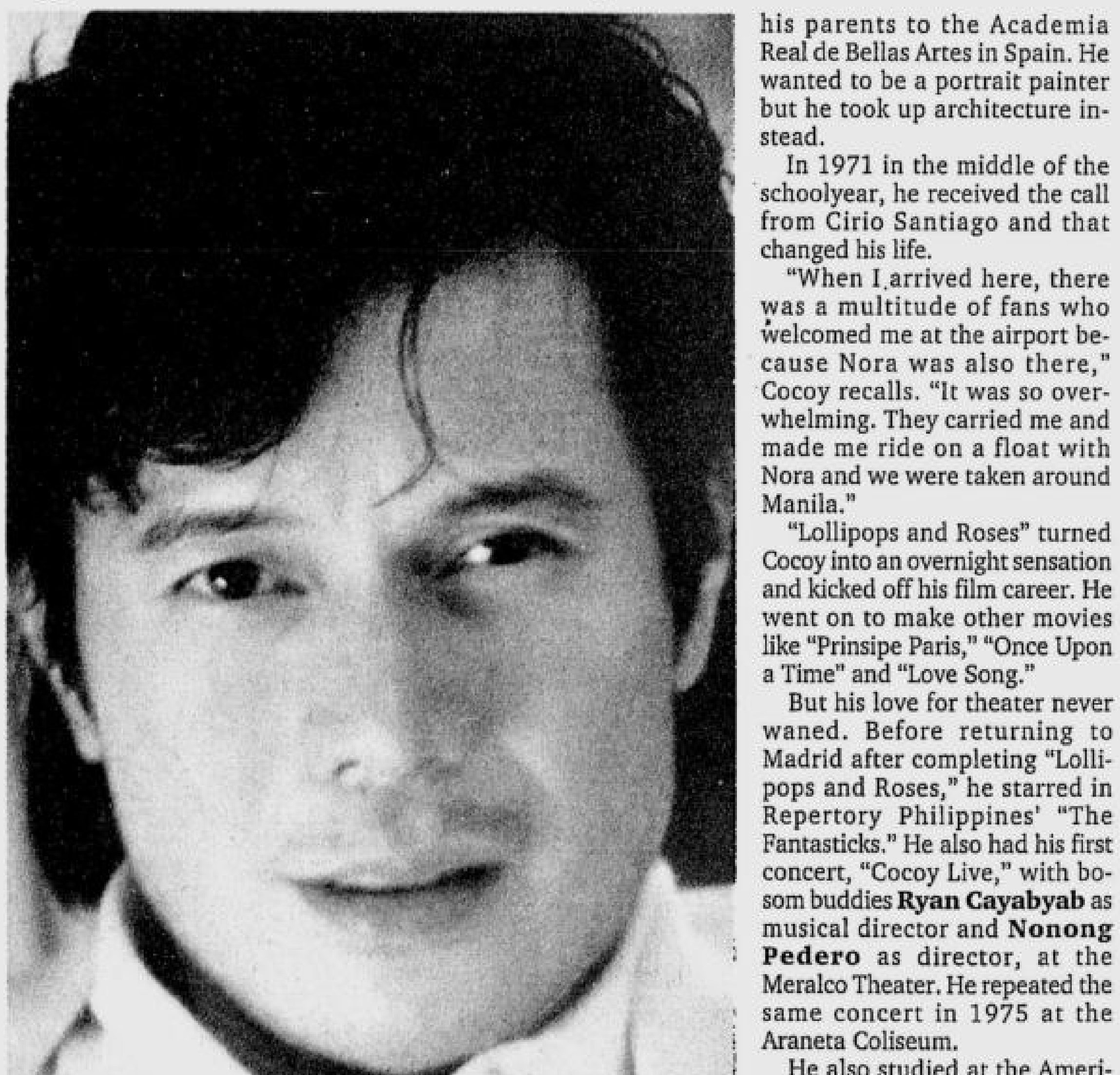
On April 26, Cocoy will mount the solo show "Journey of the Heart," at the NBC Tent at The Fort. Sharing the stage with him are The Powerdance and The Madrigal Singers, with special guests including **Nora Aunor**.

"I really hope she'll be there because I invited her," he says of Nora.

Musical director is **Ian Monsod**. Stage director is **Douglas Nierras. Leo Rialp** is designing a baroque-inspired stage.

Solo concerts have taken a backseat to Cocoy's acting career, which started when he was chosen to play the male lead in Paramount Pictures' search for the local production of "Romeo and Juliet," in line with the promotion of the 1967 **Franco Zeffirelli** film.

Cocoy was introduced to TV audiences by the late **Elvira Manahan** on "Two for the Road," where he sang the theme of the "Romeo and Juliet" film. He made his theater debut in Repertory Philippines' production of "Plaza Suite," where he performed with his mother. He played the brief but much-applauded role of a bridegroom.



PROTEST ACT. Cocoy grows his hair long to protest against violence.

His first starring role in a stage musical was in "Fiddler on the Roof," also for Repertory Philippines.

In 1970, he was Caliph in "The Best of Broadway," produced by the late **Conching Sunico**.

After high school at La Salle Greenhills, Cocoy was sent by his parents to the Academia Real de Bellas Artes in Spain. He wanted to be a portrait painter but he took up architecture instead.

In 1971 in the middle of the schoolyear, he received the call from Cirio Santiago and that changed his life.

"When I arrived here, there was a multitude of fans who welcomed me at the airport because Nora was also there," Cocoy recalls. "It was so overwhelming. They carried me and made me ride on a float with Nora and we were taken around Manila."

"Lollipops and Roses" turned Cocoy into an overnight sensation and kicked off his film career. He went on to make other movies like "Prinsipe Paris," "Once Upon a Time" and "Love Song."

But his love for theater never waned. Before returning to Madrid after completing "Lollipops and Roses," he starred in Repertory Philippines' "The Fantasticks." He also had his first concert, "Cocoy Live," with bosom buddies **Ryan Cayabyab** as musical director and **Nonong Pedero** as director, at the Meralco Theater. He repeated the same concert in 1975 at the Araneta Coliseum.

He also studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, where he received his diploma from the queen of the American stage, Helen Hayes. He went to the Julliard School of Music in New York.

He was in more Repertory plays: "Pippin," "Sweeney Todd," "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," "Guys and Dolls," "Evita," "The Elephant Man," "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," "Into the Woods," "Camelot" and "Les Miserables." Then he got the chance to join the original cast of "Miss Saigon" in London.

He initially played the role of the assistant commissar and he later graduated to The Engineer.

Producer **Cameron McKintosh** singled him out to open the musical in Sydney, where he completed a year-long contract.

"I did eight shows a week with or without diarrhea," Cocoy says. "God gave me the energy to perform. Cameron wanted me to do it for another six months, but I had to beg off because my dad called me up and asked for my help.

"I had to return to the country in 1998 to help him prepare for the country's centennial celebration. My dad rarely asked for my help so when he called, it was hard to say no."

Included in his repertoire on Friday are songs like "Travelling Boy," "What's Love Got To Do with It," a Supremes medley which he will perform with an all-male back-up band and dancers, nostalgic tunes from the Big Band era, a Spanish suite of cuts from his CD, "Te Quiero," OPM and a Beatles medley.

He hastens to add that he has been growing his hair as a sign of protest against violence in the country.

"I'll break my back and do the works to give a fabulous show, because I want the public to feel my gratitude," Cocoy says.

Ely Buendia sub admits . . .

From page A32

Kris said that when she heard of the Ely Buendia-Eraserheads split up, she told the other band members she wanted to audition. Kris received a phone call from Raimund several days later and she was surprised to be told that the E-heads was interested in taking her even without the usual audition.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "I've (always considered myself) a fan. I enjoyed humming along with Ely as a member of the audience."

Kris said she was already into music as early as age three. To her family, it was a normal thing to get together and sing.

"Do you remember when we were plagued with brownouts during the Aquino administration?" she says. "My parents, relatives and I would sing together during brownouts. You'd be amazed at how diverse our repertoire was."

Their repertoire was composed of songs from the '30s to the late '80s, Visayan love songs and even songs only heard in the rural towns of Misamis Oriental. "All generations were represented," she explained.

"I'm not the most talented singer in my family," she said. "But as far as I know, I'm the only one who has the guts to sing professionally."

Like most aspiring musicians, Kris started honing her talent in high school. She played the guitar for a five-piece band called Blue Pearl.

"Those were fun times. We covered Poison and The Primitives. We weren't in tune but it didn't matter. We felt like rock stars!"

Now that she will be singing with the E-heads, Kris assures Posporos fans they can still have their regular dose of the band's flirtatious and spunky tunes.

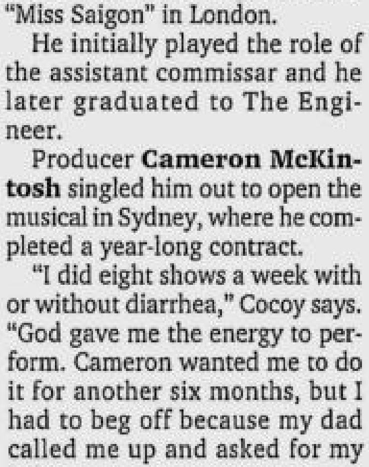
Pinch-hit

Twisted Halo guitarist Jason Caballa will pinch-hit for Kris in Fatal Posporos. "If I can't make it to FP gigs, the three (Jason, bassist Donna Macalino and drummer Annette Ortiz) will split the vocal chores," she said.

Kris, now 25, took up mass communication at the University of the Philippines and majored in film because "at that time, it was a non-quota course."

After graduation, she worked as an artist for the Roadrunner Network in Makati, doing 3D special effects and animation.

"If I hadn't been into music, I would probably be involved in film post-production," she said.



DEVOTED FAN. Kris knows all E-heads songs by heart.

Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: Is it true that early in your career, you had a drinking problem?

Guest: Oh yes, I admit.

Host: Why did you feel you needed to drink?

Guest. Because I was very insecure with the big people I met. I had no self-esteem, and yet I had to socialite. So, I had to drink to be able to socialife!

(Socialite? Socialife? *Ano ba talaga, kuya?*)

***

Host: As an expert make-up artist, can you give our viewers some tips for make-up that is appropriate for the summer season?

Guest: OK, so, ever since it summer *na*, make-up *mo*, *dapat* light *lang*!

(Ah, so!)

***

Quizmaster: Who is the grandmother of Prince Charles?

Contestant: Gloria Romeo!

(Where did that come from?!)

***

Host: You're very wealthy, but I hear you're very independent.

Guest: Oh yes, I have no driver.

Host: Is that right?

Guest: Oh yes, I dry my own car!

(Huh?)

***

Host: How have you kept your terrific figure all these years? Can you share your secret?

Guest: Well, it's easy, no mystery at all. I just itch the right ditches!

(*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: How did the two of you fall in love?

Guest: When we met at the birthday party of a friend.

Host: Who fell in love first?

Guest: It was mutual of attraction!

(*Yun na.*)

***

Host: Will you talk with your estranged wife, to settle the issues that separated you in the first place?

Guest: *Saka na lang*, after *nag*-subsibe *na ang mga* emotion.

(*Ay*, subside!)

***

Host: After you get your annulment from your wife, do you want to get married again?

Guest: Of course, I want to be a husband again!

Host: To a new a girl?

Guest: No, I want to be a good husband to my children!

(Well, if you incest—!)

***

Host: I hear that your show in the States was a flop?

Guest: No, there's not a tooth to it!

(*Ay*, tooth!)

Feedback

FROM **Eloy D. Avena** of Baguio City: "Your column piece on film archives has interested me. Baguio City has the cool climate that is needed to keep old movies in tip-top condition. What can be done about putting up a film archive here?"

NUT'S NOTES: Local archivists have cited Baguio's cool weather as a plus factor, but it is certainly not the sole consideration. It takes a lot of money to put up a professional film archive, and it must be closer to Metro Manila, so that film researchers can avail of its facilities and movie library. That's why some people have expressed a preference for the Tagaytay-Silang area.

But there's nothing to stop you from putting up a perhaps smaller and more regionally-oriented film archive in Baguio City, especially if you can get funding from government or foundations.

Look for a building or space that you can acquire for a reasonable amount, research the physical and technological requirements, build up a film library, get the support and interest of the local community and schools, and you're in business.

Bata teams up with Amy in new TV ad

BILLIARDS king Efren "Bata" Reyes teams up with TV host Amy Perez, not in a nine-ball competition, but in McDonald's new TV commercial that makes them an unbelievably amusing pair.

Created by McDonald's for its amazing new promo offer, the TV ad shows Perez doing what she does best, hosting a game show.

Naturally, the show climaxes with the final round question, which surprises everybody. Not only is the question very easy, it is about billiards, with no other than the master of the sport as the contestant.

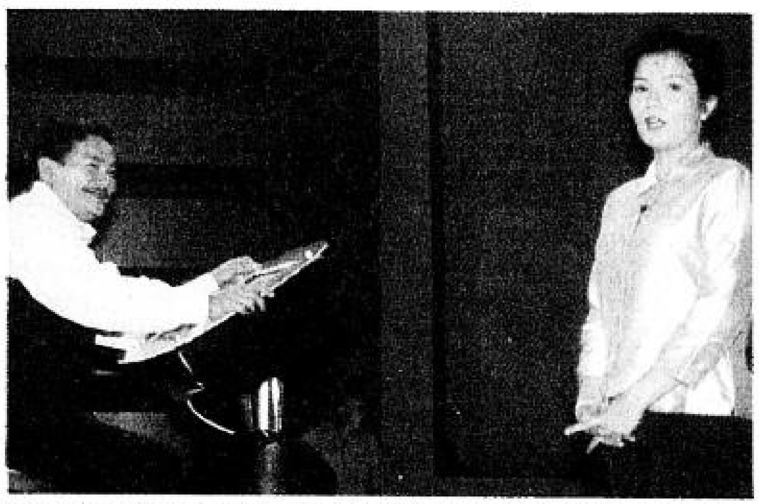
But even before Bata can fully express his disbelief, the scene is gracefully interrupted by a similarly unbelievable announcement, the new McDonald's mashed potato priced at only P15.

Watched by some 80 studio viewers, this doubly unbelievable scene truly exudes the usual excitement that explains the current popularity of game shows.

Nonetheless, it is a big departure from Bata's usual billiard hall scenes and McDonald's has done some kind of a paradigm shift via this game show concept.

The TV ad is Bata's fifth since his spectacular victory in Cardiff, Wales, and his second for McDonald's.

Directed by Sid Maderazo, the new TV ad is part of McDonald's "Unbelievable" campaign series.



"UNBELIEVABLE" PAIR: Billiards king Efren "Bata" Reyes and TV host Amy Perez.

Party all night long at Club Sundance

CLUB Sundance, whose art deco motif beckons from a surging tower among the surrounding mix of other rival foreign and domestic chains of resto-bar franchisees converging at the Brick Road, never had it as fiery and vibrant as this summer to cater to the ever-changing pulse and taste of discriminating customers.

The towering Club Sundance is a four-story venue for all-night dancing or listening to dance music belching forth from state-of-the-art gizmo orchestrated by dynamic DJs. The dancing floor opens up to a wide verandah grill where one can bask and chatter over some food and drinks with the bright sky for a canopy.

One notch higher from the main dancing floor of Sundance is the second floor level which offers yet another surprise. The platform on the viewing deck is perfect for dancing.

Sundance's infratheatrics are its nightly activities to perk up the season flowing out from the creative mind of Agile A. Camera, a marketing management graduate from De La Salle Bacolod who is also a noted disco- partyphile and a gourmet in her own right. Agile, the wife of "disco king" Wopsy Zamora, acts as the executive vice president of Club Sundance.

There's the "Dream Girl of the Week Search" which gathers the best and the daring. At stake for the winner is the latest brand of Honda Motorbike.

On Thursdays, The Brick Road open field becomes a convergence zone to showcase selected show bands and famous rappers al fresco coordinated by Agile's marketing manager and techno sound whiz Glen Maybew.

Friday sizzles with hip-hop reggae and Sabor Latino music typical of Euro-African, Jamaican night swaying.

Saturday is for dance aficionados, while Sundays is especially for grand ballroom dancing affair.

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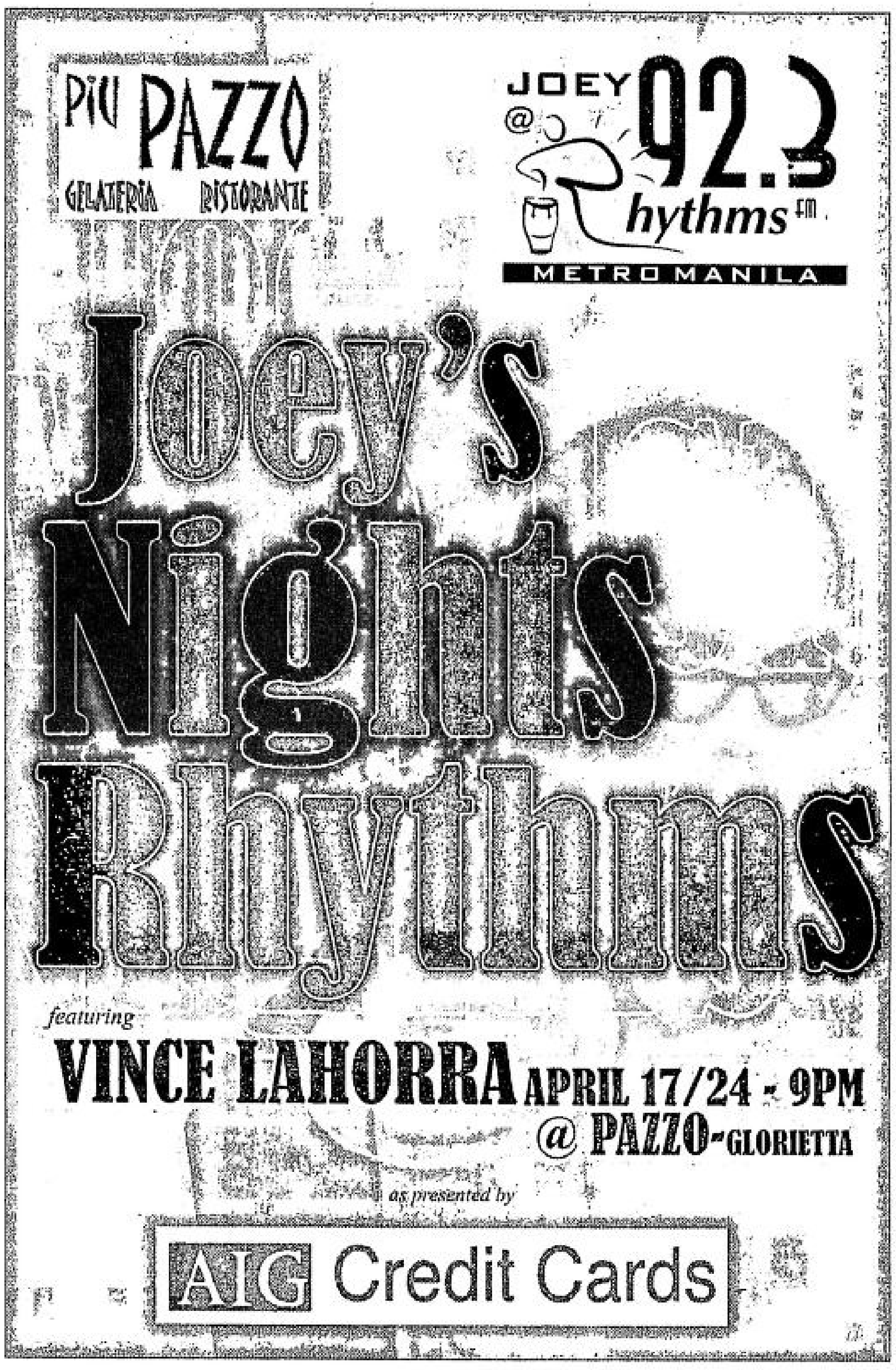

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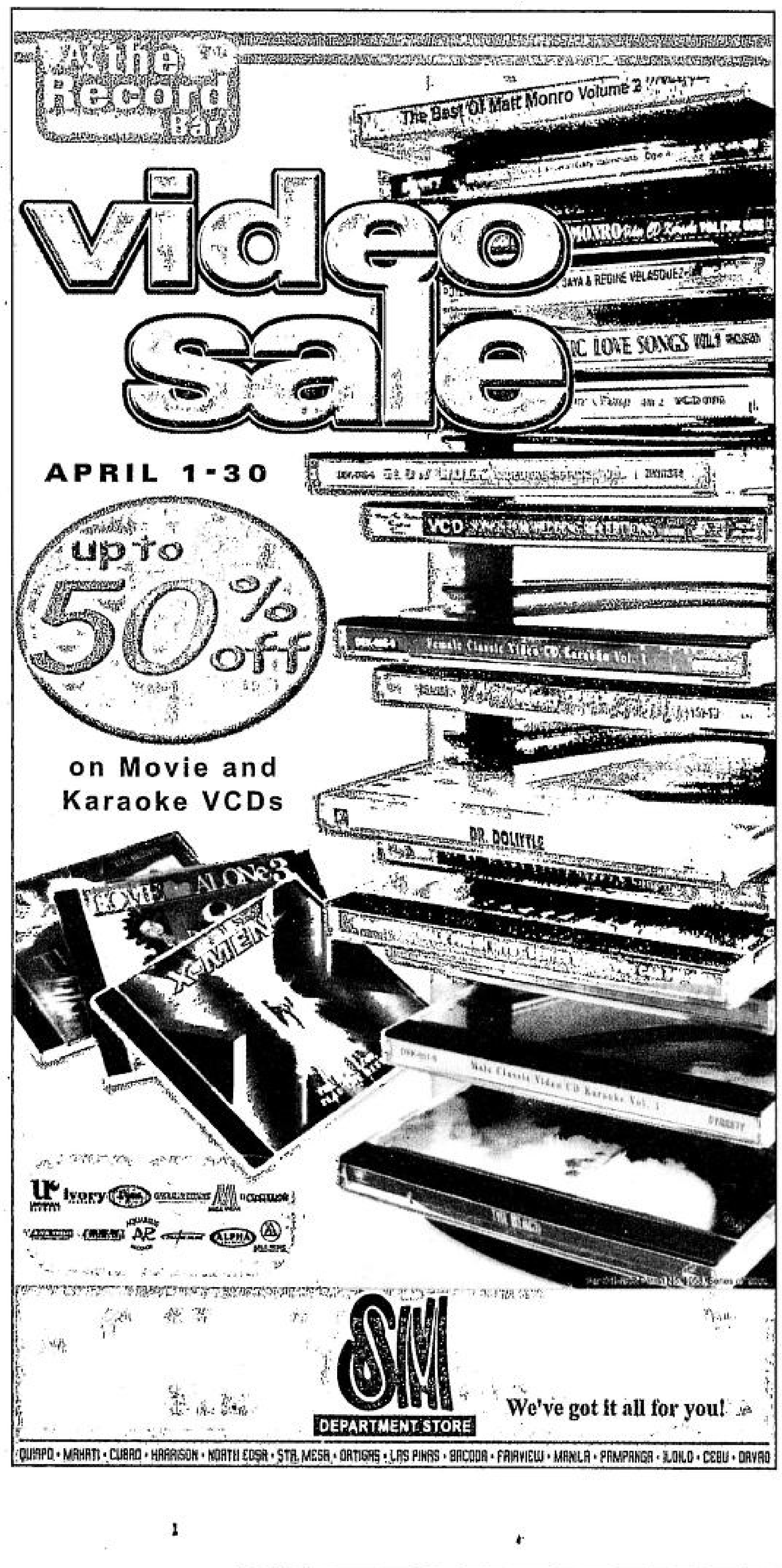

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1 ICE AGE
2 SCORPION KING
3 (DOLBY) S2PID LUV
4 (DTS) TIME MACHINE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) ROLLERBALL
2 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4 (DTS) SCORPION KING

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) SCORPION KING
2 ROLLERBALL
3 (DTS) SHOWTIME
4 PAROLA
5 S2PID LUV

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 ROLLERBALL
2 SCORPION KING
3

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 SCORPION KING
2 ROLLERBALL
3 RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 SHOWTIME
2 S2PID LUV
3

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1
2
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
2 (DTS) SCORPION KING

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 PAROLA
2 S2PID LUV
3 SCORPION KING

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 S2PID LUV
2 TIME MACHINE
3 COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
4 E.T.

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
2 S2PID LUV
3 (DTS) SCORPION KING
4 SHOWTIME

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2 SCORPION KING
3 DEVIL MASK
4 I AM SAM
5 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
6 ROLLERBALL
7 SNOW DOGS
8 MONTE CRISTO
9 BLADE 2
10 SHOWTIME

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1 SCORPION KING
2 BLADE 2
3 ROLLERBALL
4 DEVIL MASK
5 SHOWTIME
6 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
7 I AM SAM

Metro East -
Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1 SCORPION KING
2 DEVIL MASK
3 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4 I AM SAM
5 ROLLERBALL
6 SNOW DOGS
7 SHOWTIME
8 BLADE 2

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1 SCORPION KING
2 E.T.
3 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4 I AM SAM
5 ROLLERBALL
6 E.T.
7 S2PID LUV
8 SHOWTIME

Imus
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1 SCORPION KING
2 SNOW DOGS
3 ROLLERBALL
4 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5 I AM SAM
6 S2PID LUV

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2 BLADE 2
3 ICE AGE
4 EVIL WOMAN
5 S2PID LUV
6 MIMIC 2

Iloilo
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1 SCORPION KING
2 BLADE 2
3 EVIL WOMAN
4 TIME MACHINE
5 BLOW DRY
6 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Star Mills-
Sn Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1 SCORPION KING
2 MONTE CRISTO
3 SHOWTIME
4 SCORPION KING
5 MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
6

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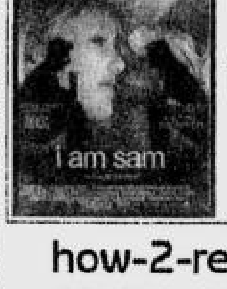

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	S2PID LUV
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ROLLERBALL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DEVIL'S MASK
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	I AM SAM
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	INOG SA PILIT/TEEN HOUSED
ODEON	SCORPION KING
ODEON-2	ITLOG
ROBEN	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	HOT DOG
TIMES	THE OTHERS/TIGERS CLAWS
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
REMAR-2	SCORPION KING
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SCORPION KING
B	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
C	PISTOLERO
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-2	3RD GERMAN FILM WEEK
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	IKA-7 GLORYA
CINEMA-2	HOTDOG THE MOVIE
CINEMA-3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-6	ICE AGE
CINEMA-7	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-8	E.T.
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ROLLERBALL
CINEMA-12	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-14	I AM SAM
CINEMA-15	S2PID LUV
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-2	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-4	ROLLERBALL
CINEMA-5	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-6	I AM SAM
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

RELAX & SEE A MOVIE

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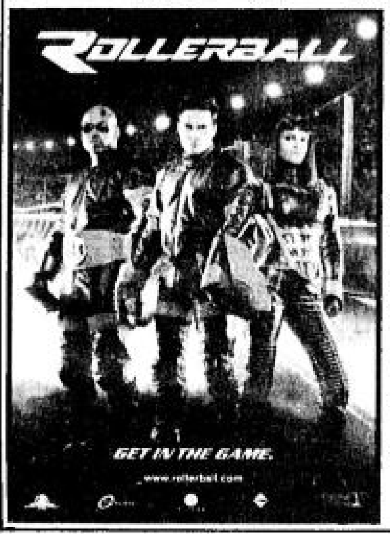
No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.



Bakbakan na!

Hot movie on new 'bloodsport' from the director of 'Die Hard'

High-octane action director John McTiernan (DIE HARD) presents a hot new movie packed with head-slamming action, breakneck speed and visceral thrills, in Columbia Pictures' ROLLERBALL.

In 2005, a violent game is the world's #1 phenomenon. Watched by the entire world, Rollerball is an extreme blood sport played with motorbikes, skates, a figure 8 track, a steel ball -- and no rules.

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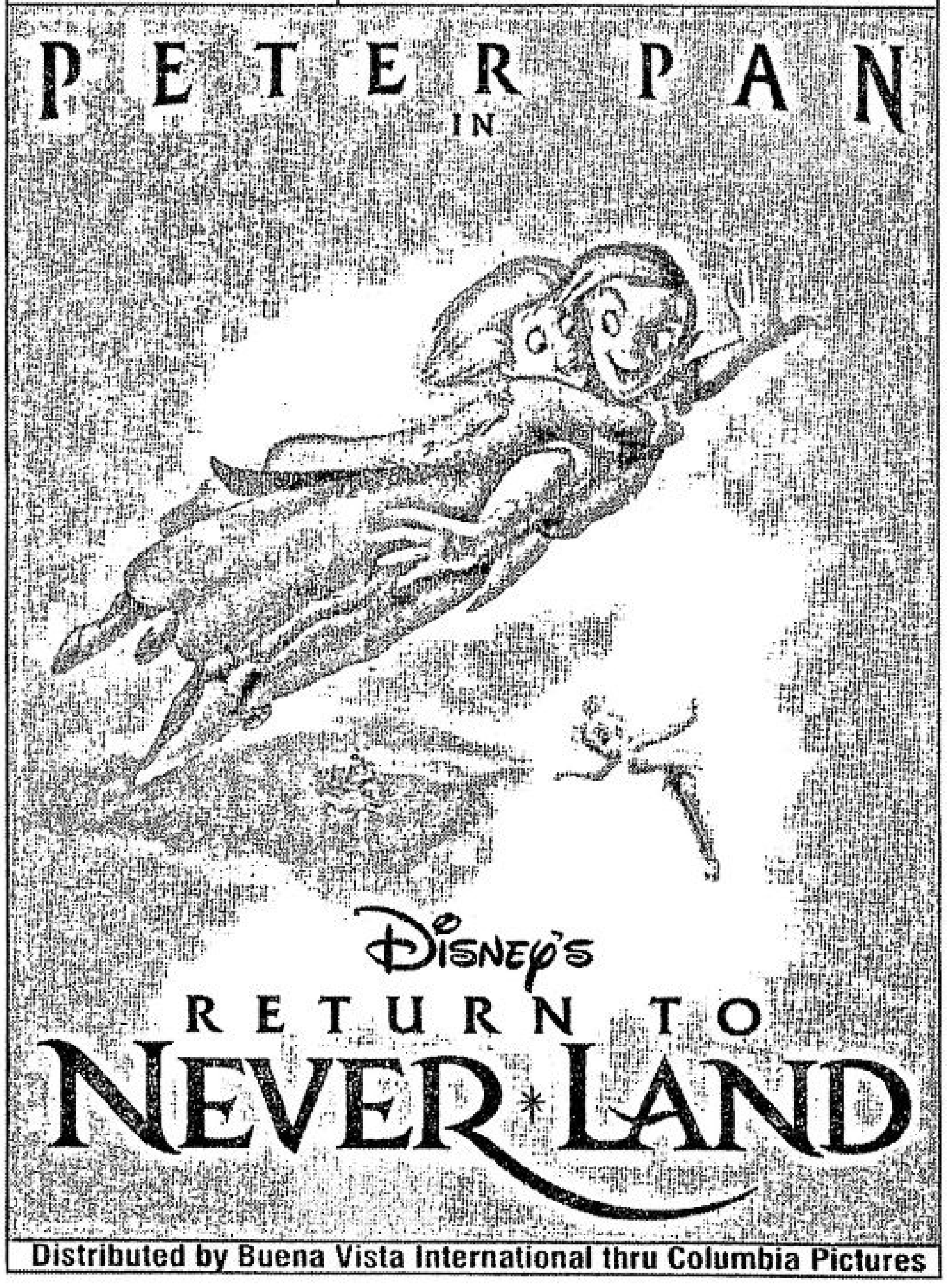

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SNOW DOGS - GP 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15	**SCORPION KING- P 13** 1:20, 3:30,5:40, 7:50, 10:00	**RETURN TO NEVERLAND - GP** 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40
ROLLERBALL - R 18 11:25, 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	**SHOWTIME - P 13** 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	**I AM SAM - GP** 11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10

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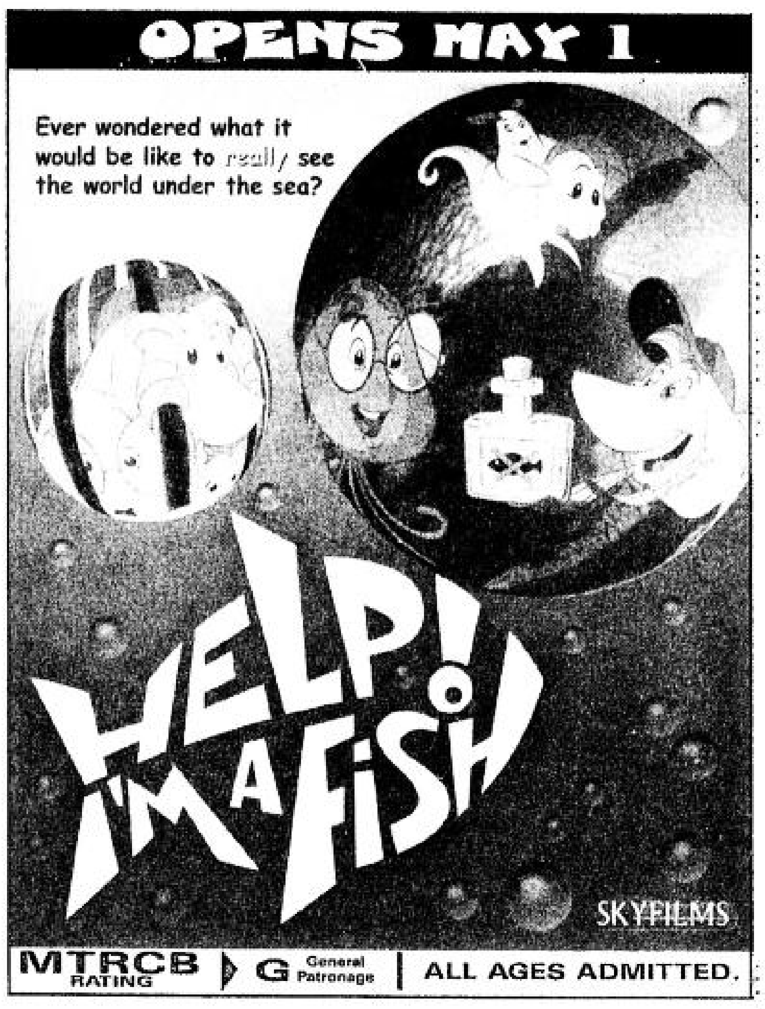
OPENS MAY 1

Ever wondered what it would be like to *really* see the world under the sea?



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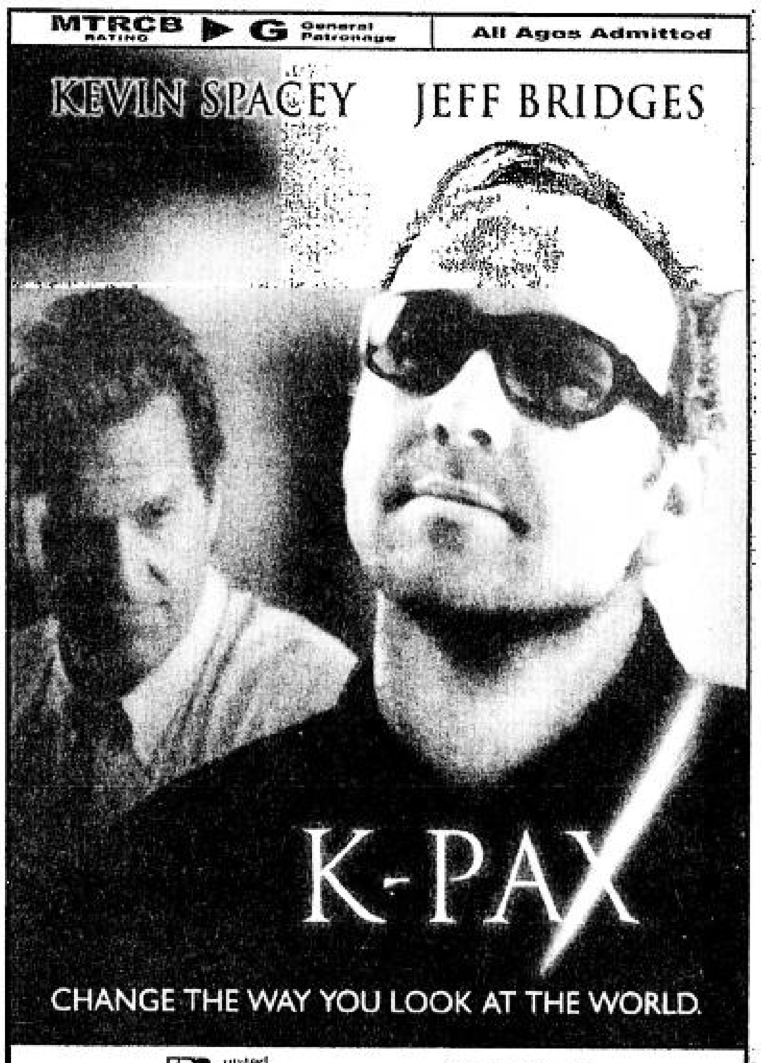
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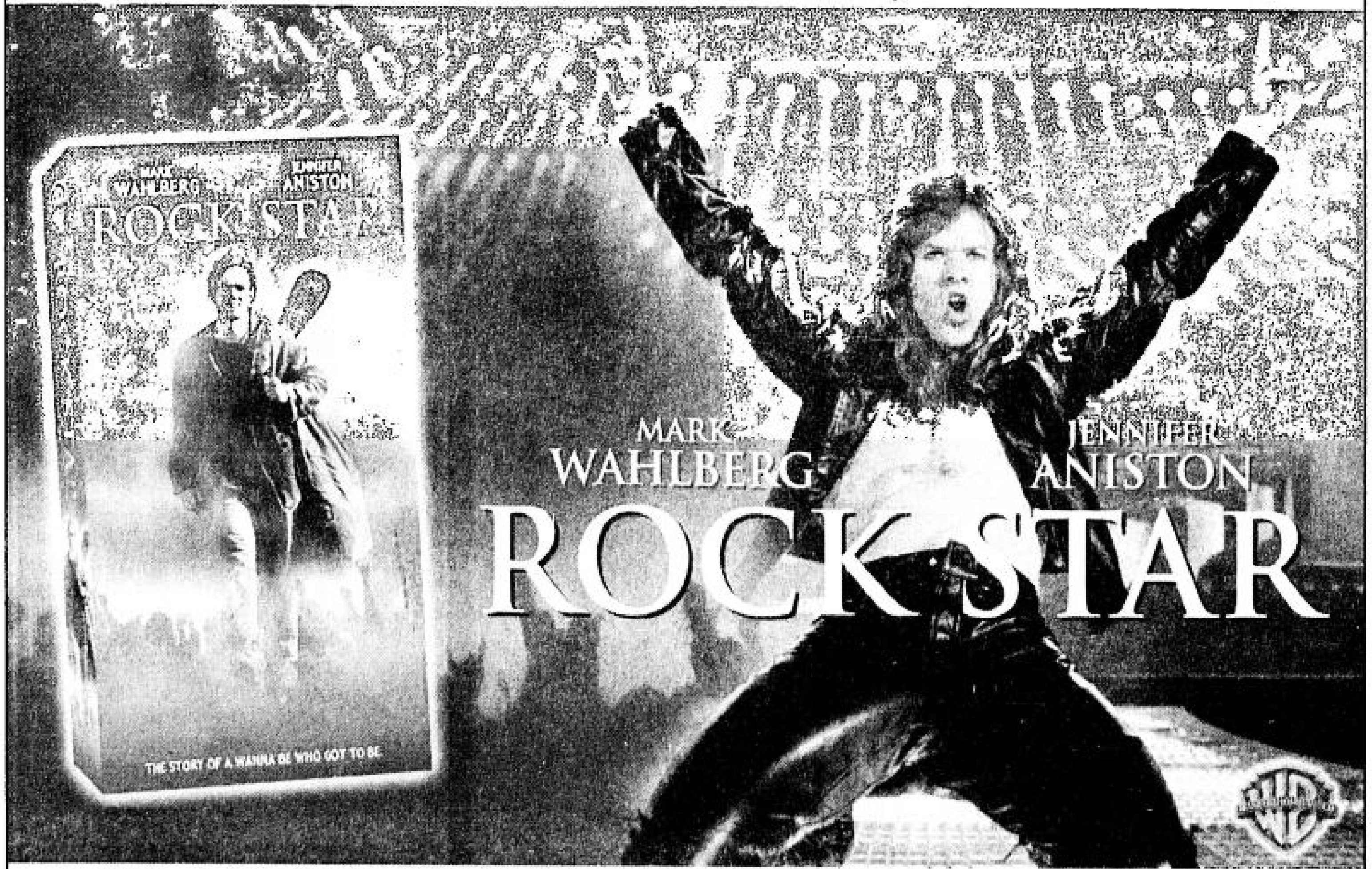

A HEAD-BANGING STORY OF FAME AND THE PRICE IT TAKES!

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EDDIE MURPHY
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SHOWTIME

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Ely Buendia sub admits Fatal attraction to Eraserheads

By Marinel R. Cruz

"KAMI po ang **Eraserheads," new vocalist Kris Gorra announces to a bewildered audience.** MIKE ALQUINTO

THE APRIL 19 performance of The Eraserheads at the Hard Rock Café was not just your usual E-heads show. The band surprised the crowd by performing with a female singer in place of former main man Ely Buendia.

Kris Gorra announced, *"Kami po ang* Eraserheads," and the bewildered audience buzzed like bees.

The media hype and publicity blitz that usually preceded the band's every performance were missing. "It was supposed to be a surprise," Kris told the INQUIRER a day after the show.

About a month ago, it was Ely who surprised Eraserheads bassist Buddy Zabala with a text message that said, "I'm quitting the 'Heads."

Buddy said there were no long discussions after that text message. The band members met to settle conflicts in their contract.

"He just wanted to leave," said Buddy, apparently avoiding further discussion on the alleged rift between Ely and the band.

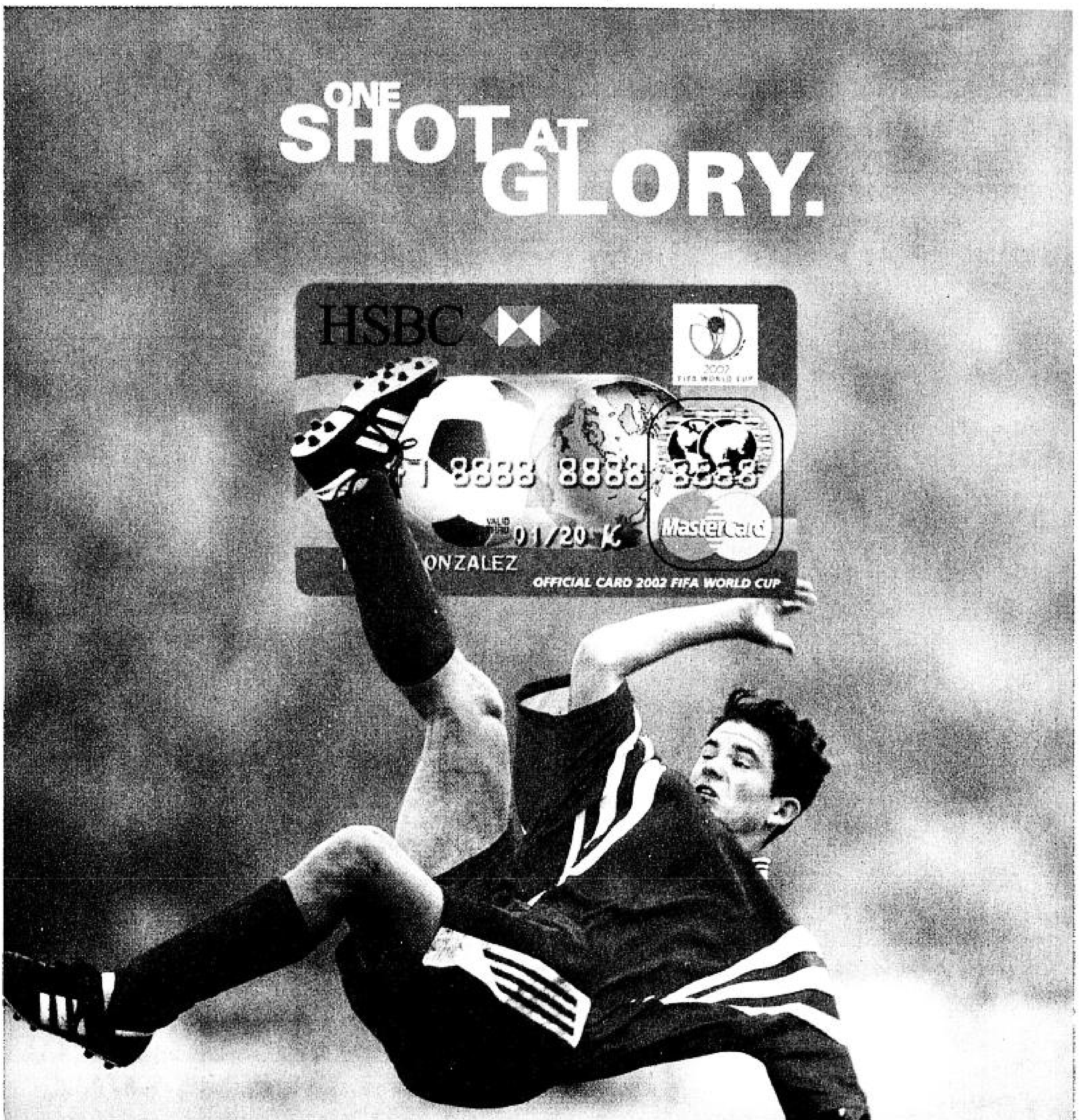
Kris has been performing onstage for eight years, as the vocalist and lead guitarist of the all-female alternative group Fatal Posporos.

She considers "being a Fatal Posporo" the biggest factor in her getting to become the new E-heads vocalist.

Fatal Posporos manager Earnest Mangulabnan used to handle accounts for the E-heads, too. "Paper View," Posporos debut album, was produced by Buddy and E-heads drummer Raimund Marasigan.

Now, with Kris as vocalist, the E-heads have so far written six songs, two of which they sang in their Hard Rock gig. "The songs are really new, we don't even have a title for them yet," explained Buddy.

ELY/ A28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Keep our chair, IBC 13 members appeal to GMA

By Michelle V. Remo

MEMBERS of the Intercontinental Broadcasting Corp. (IBC) Channel 13 are asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to retain Cerge M. Remonde as the network's chair of the board of directors.

"It is with utmost humility and determination that we are appealing to you, Madam President, to keep chairman Remonde in Channel 13," says a letter from TV 13 Cebu.

According to Dionisio Laro, president of the IBC 13 rank and file union, members of the network heard that their chair would be replaced, reportedly effective May 1, after reports of "mismanagement" of the network reached Malacañang.

Laro said the IBC 13 employees were surprised and didn't actually know where the news came from. What the members are sure of, he said, is that Remonde is doing well as chair of the board of directors. Laro dismissed the reports of mismanagement by Remonde as mere rumors.

IBC 13 Supervisors and Directors Union president Samson Cordova said there had been earlier reports that Remonde and Dante Ang, chair of RPN Channel 9, would swap posts.

Cordova said Ang once invited members of the supervisors' union to a meeting but they declined, saying they were not told of the meeting agenda. Cordova said they would only agree to meet once the agenda was made clear to them.

He said that according to another report, a board member, Philip Juico, would replace Remonde. This report came after Ang, the President's personal publicist, was given another position as senior PR consultant, according to Cordova.

He said that since there was no other clear reason for replacing Remonde as chair of the IBC board, the only possible reason he could think of was politics.

Laro of the rank and file union said that it was the first time in IBC 13 history since the government sequestered it in 1986 that there was a good employee-management relationship and that employee benefits have improved.

The network members said in their letter that Remonde "is at the helm of some very great plans and programs . . . and leaving us in the middle of all these preparations would be disastrous, demoralizing and might even make all that we have started come to naught."

They said some of these plans are the "New Face, New Attitude" program and the new vision/mission of the company.

The staff members and management of IBC 13 Davao, Cebu, Iloilo, and the members of the IBC Supervisors and Directors Union said Remonde should be given the chance to "finish and accomplish" the projects initiated by the network under his leadership.

WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 24, 2002

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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Gov't finalizes tax scheme for AUVs

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENTS of Finance and of Trade and Industry have decided to slap an excise tax of as much as 100 percent on big and expensive vehicles.

The government is ready with the amendments to the motor vehicle taxation scheme and if it could find a sponsor for the bill, the DOF could file it in Congress next week, Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer said yesterday.

The new bill would focus on shifting the basis of motor vehicle taxation to the wholesale price from the current basis of fuel type and engine displacement.

The amendments would also lift the exemption from excise taxes unduly given to vehicles with a seating capacity of 10 or more, an incentive that was meant to benefit only the so-called Asian utility vehicles or those with a 60-percent local content.

Based on the limits agreed by the two government agencies, AUVs priced P600,000 and below would be slapped a 3-percent excise tax from the current zero percent. Sports utility vehicles worth P600,000 and below would have to pay an excise tax of 10 percent.

Vehicles being sold for more than P600,000 but not exceeding P1 million would carry an excise tax of 15 percent, while those worth up to P2 million would have to pay a tax of 25 percent.

Any vehicle priced above P2 million would have to shoulder an excise tax of 100 percent. The government had earlier planned to impose a tax of no more than 5 percent even on the more expensive luxury vehicles.

A finance official noted that the government would like to include as part of the amendments a provision to index the excise taxes to allow the government to raise the tax rates to reflect any substantial increase in the vehicle selling prices.

The government expects to collect only P2.5 billion to P3 billion in additional revenues a year if the amendments would be approved by Congress.

It had originally targeted to raise P5 billion in incremental revenue on top of the P5 billion in excise taxes it collects yearly from car manufacturers.

Last year, the government was still considering to exempt the bare AUVs being used for public transportation from the excise tax but that plan had been dropped.

The lifting of the exemption on 10 seaters, including AUVs, was meant to plug a revenue leak since some manufacturers and importers pass off the expensive luxury vehicles as 10 seaters when the administrative regulation meant to benefit only the AUVs.

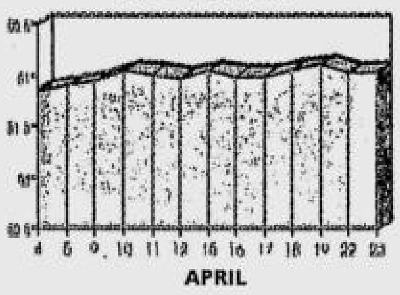
Early this year, the DOF had planned to address the loophole through an administrative order from the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Lately, it agreed to consolidate the issue with the legislative

GOV'T/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

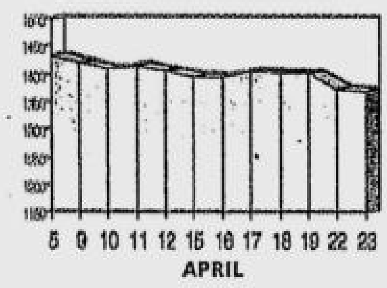
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.96 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 23, 2002

¥129.95 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 23, 2002

GOLD: $302.45
per ounce Hong Kong,
April 23, 2002

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.3% lower

SHARE prices closed 0.3 percent lower yesterday due to extended profit-taking and concerns about law and order following a series of deadly bomb blasts in the South, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 4.43 points to 1,369.36.

"I think because of the peace and order situation, which has a lot of influence on how foreign investors view our market, a lot of blue chips are trading weak until (yesterday). Probably for the next few weeks the market could still be weak," said Teresa Lee Jahrling of Tower Securities.

Bomb blasts in the southern city of General Santos on Sunday and Monday left 14 people dead and 60 injured. In addition, a Muslim rebel group that claimed credit for some of the bombs has said that more will be planted later.

There is also concern that followers of deposed President Joseph Estrada may try to stage a repeat of their May 1, 2001, violent riot at the gates of the presidential palace.

Volume turnover rose to 415 million shares but value fell to P794.2 million from 325.35 million shares worth P2.40 billion on Monday.

AFP

Sy camp dismisses bank merger talks

THE GROUP of retail tycoon Henry Sy has ruled out an imminent merger between Banco de Oro Universal Bank and China Banking Corp. despite admitting its continued bid to raise its stake in the latter.

A source from the Sy family yesterday confirmed the ongoing accumulation of shares in China Bank, but dispelled talks that the SM group was pushing for a merger with the family's own BDO, which would debut on the Philippine Stock Exchange in May.

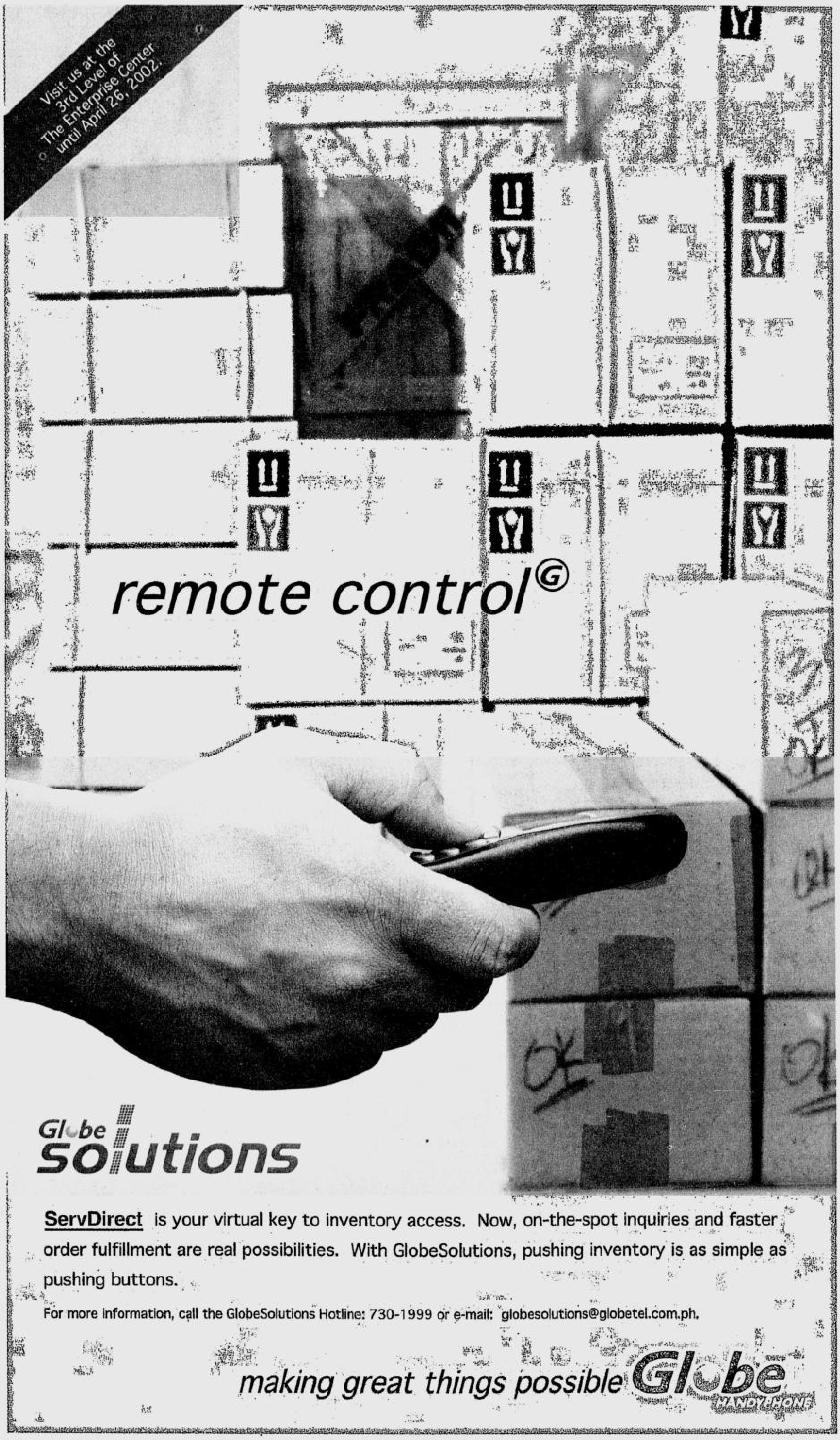
The Sy family is currently one of the main stockholders of China Bank with a 37-percent stake. The other principals are the Dee and Yuchengco families.

The source said the family was buying more China Bank shares from the market "because we believe in the company and not because there's any merger."

The source explained that based on the experiences of other big bank mergers, the Sy family believed there has not been much value added to shareholders.

"This is not the right time. Both banks are doing well on their own, so we want to let them go on with what they are doing on their own. China Bank did well this year and last year and

SY/ B3



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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	Please Call	2,000,000
Baguio Country Club	700,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	90,000	100,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	110,000
Camp John Hay	250,000	280,000
Canlubang	-	Please Call
Canyonwoods	Please Call	200,000
Capitol Hills	-	130,000
Celebrity Sports Club	180,000	195,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	230,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	260,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	270,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	Please Call	280,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	260,000	375,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	15,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	11,000,000	13,000,000
Manila Polo	2,700,000	Please Call
Manila Southwoods "A"	600,000	640,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	680,000	750,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	100,000	120,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	30,000
Montemar (Corp)	50,000	
Mt. Malarayat	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	500,000
Philippine Columbian	-	-
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	100,000	125,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	220,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	Please Call	550,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	90,000	130,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,700,000	1,800,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,100,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	300,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	190,000
Tagaytay Country Club	390,000	420,000
Tagaytay Highlands	840,000	900,000
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000	800,000
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
Valle Verde (Individual)	150,000	180,000
Valley Golf	240,000	-
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,900,000	7,200,000

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Calatagan "A"	10,000	Orchard "A"	30,000
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Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	45,000
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RP to ask WTO to settle tuna row

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES and Thailand have resolved to carry their battle for greater access for their canned tuna exports to Europe to the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement body.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said with negotiations between the two Asean countries and the European Union ending in a deadlock after five months, "the trade negotiation process calls for WTO mediation."

The Philippines and Thailand agreed in November to settle amicably a dispute over a special trade accord given by the European Union to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries during the WTO ministerial meeting in Doha, Qatar.

These negotiations are set to end on April 30 without any sign that an amicable settlement can be reached.

The Philippines and Thailand are claiming that the trade agreement between the European Union and the ACP countries discriminates against their canned tuna exports.

The special trade pact allows the 77 ACP countries to export tuna to the 15-member European Union under a quota system and without any tariff.

The agreement, however, has yet to get a waiver from the WTO.

The Philippines and Thailand, two of the world's biggest canned tuna exporters, are up in arms over this trade pact.

The European Union currently slaps a 24-percent duty on canned tuna exports from the two countries.

Roxas said the Philippines and Thailand were hoping to convince the European Union to lower duties on their canned tuna exports to as low as 5 percent.

The Philippines exports an estimated 5 million cases of tuna every year, or 60 percent of its total production capacity.

Europe and the United States each take up 40 percent of the country's tuna exports.

The Philippines is also fighting a battle for increased canned tuna access in another front—the United States.

Roxas has appealed to Washington to protect Philippine canned tuna exports to the United States.

The Philippines is in danger of losing its competitiveness if tuna exports from Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela—collectively referred to as the Andean countries—are allowed to enter the United States tax-free.

The US Congress is currently working on two bills enhancing the 1991 Andean Trade Preference Act, which expired in September.

Philippine canned tuna exports to the United States are levied duties of between 6 percent (in brine) and 35 percent (in oil).

Roxas is using Spain's 300-year colonization of the Philippines as a bargaining chip to get preferential treatment from the European Union.

The European Union is insisting that as former European colonies, the ACP countries deserve preferential treatment for their tuna exports.

In the US case, Roxas has cited the Philippines' all-out support for the US war against terrorism, specifically the Balikatan exercise in Mindanao, as a leverage to gain access to the US market.

The Andean countries are given preference to help their people get out of the narcotics trade.

Tuna exports have contributed between $100 million and $200 million to the Philippine economy annually over the last five years, although this has been slipping since hitting a peak of $208 million in 1998 because trade restrictions in key markets have impaired the country's competitiveness.

US-RP trade deal being studied

BUSINESSMEN from the Philippines and the United States have agreed to jointly explore the possibility of forging a free trade agreement between their countries.

US-Asean Business Council president Ernest Bower said the results of a study on a Philippine-US free trade agreement would be sent to President Macapagal-Arroyo in December.

Bower said the Philippines had been at the forefront of trade liberalization.

"We see an FTA with the Philippines as the next logical step to further relations between our two countries," he said.

Bower said if approved, a free trade agreement between Manila and Washington would only be the second such arrangement in Asia.

The United States recently concluded a free trade agreement with Singapore.

US-Philippine Business Committee chair Robert Driscoll said among the goals of the study was to determine whether a free trade agreement would boost trade between the two countries, and that it would be equally positive for both sides.

"This early, we think that a US-Philippine FTA will be a good fit compared to other Asean countries because of our long historical relations," Driscoll said.

The study will also analyze the impact of a free trade agreement on domestic industries.

Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz said a free trade agreement with the United States was only among the trade pacts being eyed by the Philippines.

"We are also eyeing possible FTAs with China, Japan and Europe," Luz said.

Bower and Driscoll are part of an American business mission on a four-day trip to the Philippines to promote closer ties between businessmen in the Philippines and the United States.

The group will hold discussions with businessmen and government officials in Metro Manila and Cebu.

Bower said apart from a free trade agreement, the US-Philippine Business Committee was also keen on developing the Philippines as a tourism, transportation and communication hub in Southeast Asia. ***Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.***

Regulators order Nextel to justify provisional license

Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has itself become a co-complainant in several cases filed against trunk radio operator Nextel Communications Philippines Inc.

In a statement issued yesterday, advocacy group Citizens Movement for Protectionism and Reform (CMPR) said NTC chief Eliseo Rio Jr. gave an assurance of a swift and judicious resolution of the cases.

"The commission has already become a co-complainant in the case, causing the issuance of an immediate show cause order against Nextel to explain why its provisional authority should not be revoked," Rio told CMPR officials and members in a dialogue on Friday.

Over a hundred members of CMPR accompanied their officials in lobbying for the NTC's immediate action.

"It appears that (Nextel) has committed offenses consisting of violations of certain provisions of the Constitution; the Public Service Act (Act 146), as amended; the Foreign Investment Act of 1991, as amended; the Rules and Regulations of the Commission; as well as conditions of its provisional authority," the NTC said in a two-page show cause order issued on Feb. 6.

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PROF. ALEJANDRINO J. FERRERIA
Bank of America Foundation Professor of Business Management

Prof. Ferreria is currently the Associate Dean of the Asian Center for Entrepreneurship. He spearheaded the conceptualization and implementation of the first Galing Pook Awards for local governance excellence. He has extensive academic, industry and consulting experiences in the areas of operations and production management, strategic, social, and marketing management.

Resource Person
JAIME Z. GALVEZ TAN, M.D., M.P.H.
Dr. Galvez Tan is currently a professor of the UP College of Medicine; assistant to the UP Manila Chancellor on External Linkages and president of Health Futures Foundation, Inc. He has served as UNICEF regional adviser on Health and Nutrition for East Asia and the Pacific Region. He was a former Undersecretary and Acting Secretary of the Department of Health.

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SAP posts 18% revenue hike

By Abigail L. Ho

BUSINESS solutions provider SAP Philippines Inc. said yesterday its total revenues from licenses and maintenance grew 18 percent during the January-March period, making it an "exceptional" quarter.

In a news statement, SAP marketing and alliance manager Marivic Segismundo Gamo said the company's revenue growth came from purchases by both new and old clients.

Gamo said Smart Communications Inc., Del Monte Philippines Inc. and Hitachi Corp.—all existing clients—bought new licenses from SAP.

New deals, meanwhile, were concluded with Splash Corp., Lapanday Holdings Corp. and First Sumiden, she added.

SAP also reported yesterday that it has successfully implemented its retail industry solution, mySAP Retail, for Supervalue Inc., a subsidiary of the SM group of companies.

Supervalue installed mySAP Retail in its headquarters and distribution centers to provide "a single integrated solution for their logistics and retail processes," SAP managing consultant for the retail sector Colin Lian said in another statement.

"The solution provides SVI with precise information on sales as they happen. This allows the company to know what needs to be replenished in real time, and thereby avoid losses and the inconvenience associated with a product selling out," he added.

Duty applies to all—Philcemcor

THE CEMENT industry said yesterday Taiwan's five-year punitive tariff of 45 percent applied to all 17 local cement producers, not just the two companies that were exporting to Taiwan.

"This is a slap on the Philippines and its people. Our Tariff Commission just told the whole world imports are welcome here, then here comes Taiwan telling us Philippine cement is not welcome there," former Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, spokesperson for the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp., said.

"As Taiwan Cement Corp. led the assault to block all Philippine exports, its wholly owned importing subsidiary here, TCC Cement Corp., was smuggling cement into the Philippines and was, in fact, found by the Bureau of Customs falsifying its shipping documents to reduce the tariff it pays the Philippine government," he said.

That Philippine tariff rates are the lowest in the region at 3 percent for cement from Asean and 5 percent outside the region makes TCC Cement's smuggling even more reprehensible, he said.

TCC Cement also led the move to prevent the implementation of the Safeguard Measures Act by obtaining a writ of preliminary injunction from a court to prevent the government from doing what Taiwan has just done: Defend its industry, he added.

"Philippine cement exports reached 4 percent of the Taiwan market and were blocked in just a matter of a few months. Here, imports are already 26 percent of the market partly because of smuggling and had been found, after two years of legal battle, by the Department of Trade and Industry to have caused injury and not given any consumer benefit at all, and yet are getting the red carpet from the Tariff Commission," he said.

Mirant's capex seen hitting $150M

ENERGY firm Mirant Philippines Corp. has earmarked $150 million for capital expenditures for this year.

Mirant Philippines president Edgardo Bautista said yesterday that the bulk of the amount would go to the maintenance of the firm's power plants.

"Investments on the power plants are continuous," Bautista said. "They don't stop just because the plants area already running."

The United States-based firm operates local power plants with installed capacities of about 2,300 megawatts.

The biggest of these are the 1,200-mw Sual plant in Pangasinan and the 750-mw Pagbilao plant in Quezon. Both run on coal.

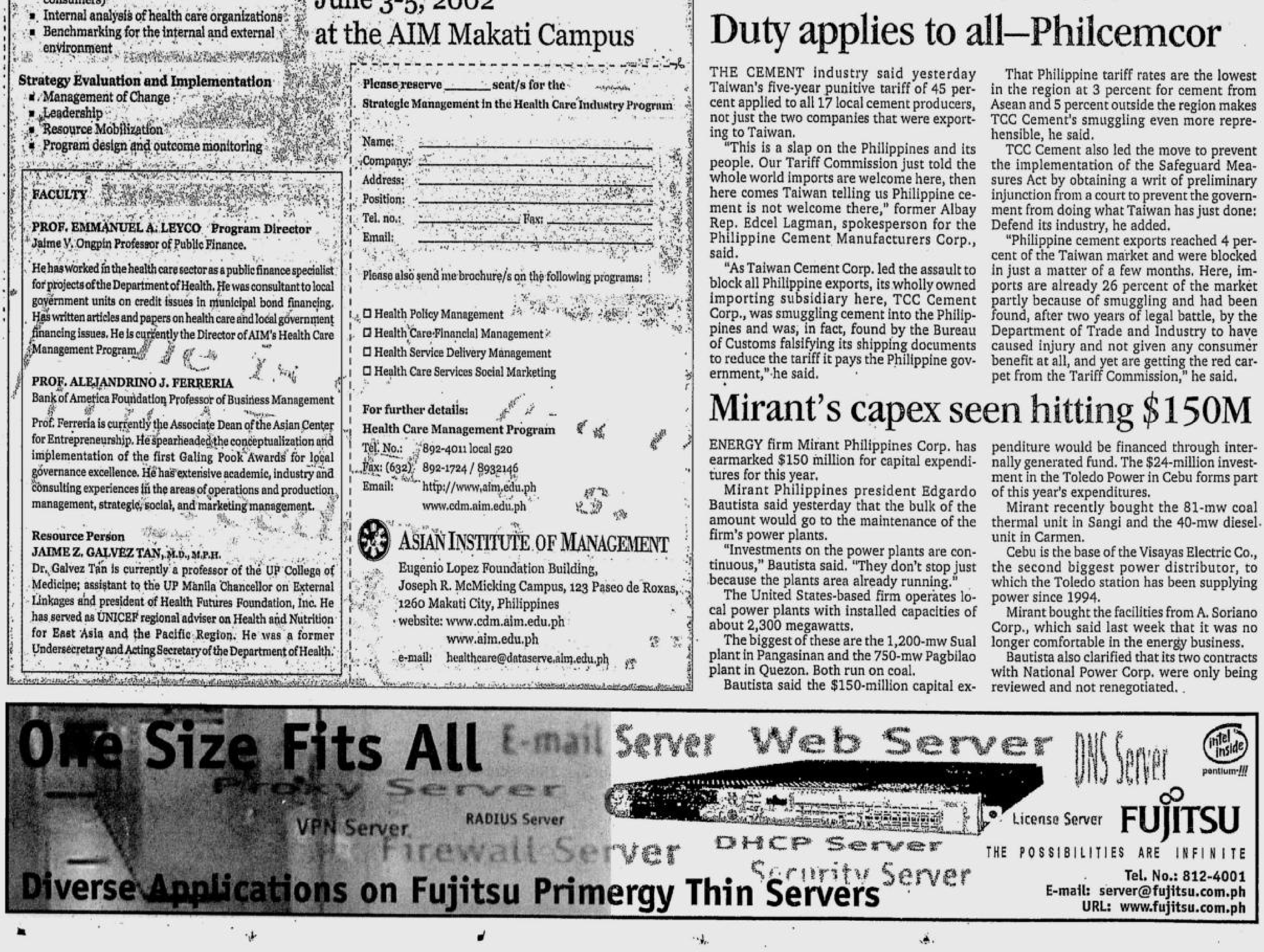
Bautista said the $150-million capital expenditure would be financed through internally generated fund. The $24-million investment in the Toledo Power in Cebu forms part of this year's expenditures.

Mirant recently bought the 81-mw coal thermal unit in Sangi and the 40-mw diesel unit in Carmen.

Cebu is the base of the Visayas Electric Co., the second biggest power distributor, to which the Toledo station has been supplying power since 1994.

Mirant bought the facilities from A. Soriano Corp., which said last week that it was no longer comfortable in the energy business.

Bautista also clarified that its two contracts with National Power Corp. were only being reviewed and not renegotiated.



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DBP: Dumped by Paterno

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE ESTRANGED wife of new DBP president Simon Paterno has written Paterno's boss, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, in an attempt to press for a better financial package "in the best interest of my children."

"While this should clearly be a private matter between us, the fact that he (Paterno) has been openly carrying on an illicit relationship with a married woman and a court case he had filed is ongoing with no indication of being resolved anytime soon may have a bearing on his recent appointment as a public official," Dina Lomongo Paterno said.

Mrs. Paterno's letter was leaked to Cocktales by a public relations agency, apparently under her direction and her counsel's, Erap lawyer Sigfrid Fortun.

The male Paterno, 43, filed for annulment now pending with the Makati Regional Trial Court. Mrs. Paterno, daughter of an ex-general, was a career officer at the Department of Foreign Affairs and had served briefly as an aide for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Paternos have three daughters, aged 13, 9, and 4.

"To date, he has not honored any proposals for a settlement that would be amicable, fair, and consistent with his capability to provide a quality of life that he had been giving his family," Mrs. Paterno said.

"I therefore question his 'sense of duty' and his intention to serve his country when he can not even first serve his family responsibly."

According to a family friend, Paterno, a former managing director of JP Morgan investment bank before he was tapped to the Development Bank of the Philippines, has been religious in providing monthly allowances to his children.

It was not immediately clear how Mrs. Paterno's latest tact would impact on his estranged husband's superiors or his appointment. Paterno's marital problems had been known to the appointing powers prior to considering him for the DBP position, details of which were previously written about in an unsigned white paper, according to the grapevine.

One finance official, according to the scuttlebutt, reached back to his Shakespearean lessons in Ateneo when asked to comment on the fallen union:

"Men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives."

Goodbye, Fiesta Carnival

FIESTA Carnival, which since the '60s has brought happiness to countless children, is scheduled to be demolished by the Aranetas this year to make way for a new Shopwise supermarket.

The country's first all-year round, covered amusement center, Fiesta Carnival has acquired the look and smell of Avenida Rizal after having been overtaken by its airconditioned, mall-based, newer competitors.

According to the grapevine, Shopwise is still negotiating with the tenants fringing Fiesta Carnival who want to retain their shops in the planned redevelopment.

If the planned Shopwise pushes through, the mid-market supermarket would just be across from and likely eat up on the market of Rustan's, the upscale department store-supermarket chain that is controlled by the same family that also controls Shopwise.

Rustan's lease is likewise expiring, and the Tantocos are said to be negotiating with the Aranetas for a renewal.

Heard through the grapevine

SGV and Punongbayan and Araullo yesterday signed a merger agreement, with SGV as the surviving entity.

The merger agreement means that SGV has discarded Arthur Andersen, and taken on Ernst & Young, Punongbayan and Araullo's Big Five correspondent, as its new foreign partner. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

Sy camp . . .

From page B1

BDO did too, so why rock the boat?" the source noted.

Profitable China Bank, which has a strong niche in the Chinese-Filipino community, is seen by many analysts as a good merger partner for other banks such as BDO.

China Bank, which has been in operation for 82 years, has total assets of P83.3 billion as of end-2001, with 138 branches and 155 automated teller machines nationwide.

In 2001, it chalked up a net income of about P1.023 billion, up from 659.77 million the previous year. It has one of the best return-on-equity ratio in the banking industry with 7.29 percent.

The bank's non-performing loan ratio of 13.74 percent is also one of the lowest in the industry, which has an average of about 18.6 percent.

Doris C. Dumlao

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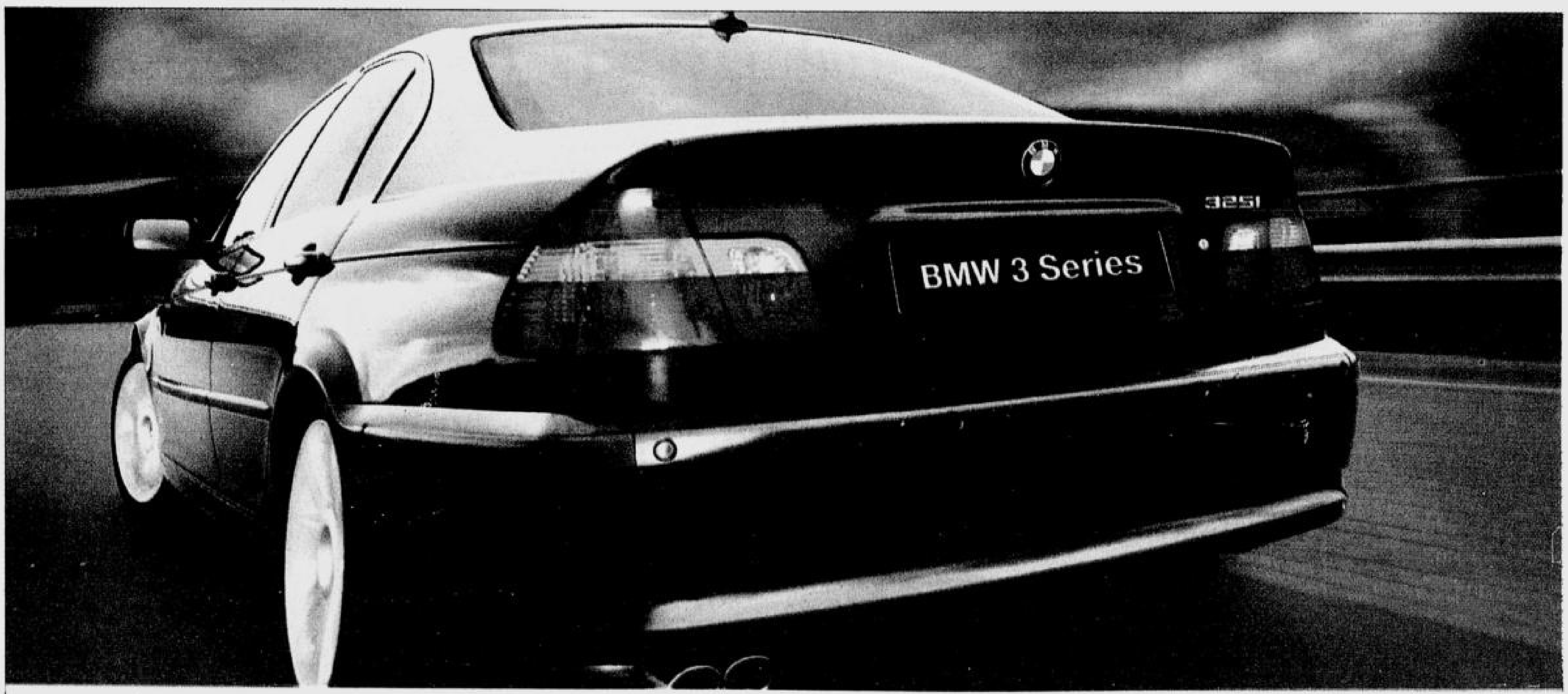

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PSE chief orders stringent review of FLI probe report

By Doris C. Dumlao
and Elena R. Torrijos

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange president Ernest Leung has put under stringent review a report by the bourse's compliance and surveillance group on the insider trading probe involving housing developer Filinvest Land Inc.

In a press briefing yesterday, Leung confirmed that the CSG had finished its preliminary report on the FLI probe. However, he declined to divulge its contents saying that the PSE has yet to come up with an official "conclusion" on the matter.

Leung's statement came out following the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) announcement that it was conducting its own investigation of the issue through its compliance and enforcement department.

The INQUIRER earlier reported that the CSG had found indications of insider trading involving FLI. A group of brokers called for the probe, citing FLI's failure to disclose details of a recent P1.2-billion bond issue.

For its part, Filinvest Development Corp., majority owner of FLI, yesterday vehemently denied participation in any insider trading activities and asked the PSE to give it the opportunity to air its side.

"We strictly adhere to high ethical standards governing trading of securities. Our overriding concern has been for the welfare of all the stockholders of FLI, primary of which is to ensure that timely and successful debt payment of FLI's $100-million convertible bond issue last February," FDC president Josephine Gotianun-Yap said in a statement to the PSE.

"FDC, its directors and shareholders have not ever been given a formal notice by the PSE of an investigation regarding insider trading charges much less any indication of wrongdoing," Yap said.

In a petition, a group of brokers noted that FLI shares were rising prior to the Feb. 5 announcement of the approval of the bond issue to a foreign institutional investor.

Yesterday, Leung said it was not fair to report on something that was not conclusive.

"I've given some instructions to address a number of things," Leung said. "These are preliminary reports. I will review them, then I'll ask questions and clarifications. At the preliminary stage of things, you don't go around and talk about it," Leung said.

"If there will be any problem, we'll bring it up to the SEC since the jurisdiction we have over listed firms is not the same as our jurisdiction over brokers," he said.

Another PSE source yesterday confirmed that the CSG report had come up with preliminary findings of insider trading based on the surge in volume of FLI shares traded prior to the announcement of the bond issue to a Singaporean investor.

In the meantime, an SEC official said its probe of the issue might take longer than that of the PSE because it had to look into more details.

Highlands Prime share price up on first trading day

THE SHARE price of Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc., the company that marked the diversification of retail tycoon Henry Sy into the leisure estate business, closed slightly up yesterday, the first day the company's shares were traded on the bourse, to P2.14 from the offer price of P2.13.

Some P13 million worth of Highlands Prime shares, equivalent to 1.6 percent of the total market turnover, was traded yesterday.

Traders said the listing of HP, a spin-off of leisure estate and gaming firm Belle Corp., came at a time when the local stock market was undergoing a correction following a continued increase that started in mid-November. The main-share PSE composite index yesterday shed off 4.4 points to close at 1,369.36.

Hans Sy, a director of HP, said his father Henry, the patriarch of the SM mall empire, had diversified into this business because of its long-term potentials.

"My father believes that tourism is the future here," Sy said. *Doris C. Dumlao*

HENRY Sy Sr. (third from right), chair of Highlands Prime, rings the opening bell of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) to signal the start of the day's trading as well as the listing of Highlands Prime. With Sy are (from left) PSE president Ernest Leung, Highlands president Antonio A. Henson, company directors Hans T. Sy and Gregorio U. Kilayko and PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco.

PSE keeps plan to extend trading hours

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange management is not giving up its plan to implement a 2-4 p.m. trading session despite a recent survey indicating that most member-brokers do not favor longer afternoon trading hours.

In a press briefing yesterday, PSE president Ernest Leung said the PSE was trying to find ways on how to help local stockbrokers cope with longer trading hours, including the possibility of subsidizing the costs of putting up the infrastructure for offsite trading.

"The story doesn't end with the survey on preference. We will look for ways to address the legitimate concerns," Leung said.

The survey conducted by the PSE's floor trading and arbitrage committee (FTAC) among member-brokers showed that 51 percent of the respondents wanted the existing 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. afternoon trading retained; 21 percent agreed to the foreign brokers' proposal to extend trading up to 4 p.m., while 20 percent favored a 30-minute extension of the existing schedule.

"There seems to be a preponderance of brokers who prefer a status quo. We would like to hold more consultations on this because the fact is that many of our neighbors hold longer trading hours. It is true that the volume in the market today is rather modest and from that point of view the justification of longer trading hours may not be strong," Leung said.

Leung noted that if the PSE would not align its trading hours with most of the markets in the region, the local bourse would miss out on opportunities arising from improved interest among foreign investors.

"We're looking at other ways of enhancing the brokers' capacity to do off-floor trading so that they can probably handle some of these things from their own offices so one can opt to do afternoon trading until 4 p.m.," Leung said.

PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco earlier said the PSE was willing to absorb some of the costs needed to put up off-site trading facility for brokers who wish to trade in the afternoon but do not have the facility to do so.

The foreign brokers who were pushing for the extension of the afternoon trading hours up to 4 p.m. explained that European investors usually dealt in Asia in real time by working at 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. London time which is about 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. here. They also said that most Asian markets—Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand and Indonesia, were open at that time. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Ramcar opposes bid to place $49M in escrow

THE RAMCAR group of companies has opposed a move by two of its creditors to place in escrow some $49.9 million that Ramcar's shareholders are expected to get from the planned securitization of Metro Rail Transit Corp.'s lease payments.

"While it may be argued that the sale of the MRT bonds may take place in the future, it would be absurd for this honorable court to issue an order, at this point in time, to place in escrow the proceeds of a future and/or an inexistent sale," Ramcar said in a motion it submitted two weeks ago to a Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

The motion was in response to petitions filed by the Bank of Philippine Islands and United Coconut Planters Bank, two of Ramcar's biggest creditors.

Ramcar's shareholders are required under their company's rehabilitation plan to contribute to an "asset pool" their MRT bonds representing their future income from their investments in MRT.

These are zero coupon bonds with a total value of $49.9 million. These debt instruments carry a sovereign guarantee and are backed by receivables from the Department of Transportation and Communications covering the period 2009-2012.

BPI and UCPB have questioned why Ramcar has remained silent on how proceeds from its MRT bonds covering 2001 to 2008 will be used.

UCPB said in its petition that Ramcar seemed to have no intention to commit proceeds from the future sale of its MRT bonds to pay its creditors.

BPI, for its part, said the manner of conveyance of the bonds or the proceeds of the bonds was not explained in Ramcar's rehabilitation plan.

Ramcar has asked its 19 creditors to allow it to restructure P1.8 billion of its P7.9 billion in total obligations over a 10-year period and to accept a payment-in-kind arrangement for the remaining P6.2 billion.

Ramcar produces 12 brands of vehicle batteries and operates two plants that produce 480,000 units a month. It controls about 70 percent of the domestic car battery market.

Controlled by the Augustines family, Ramcar encountered financial troubles as a result of the Asian financial crisis that made it difficult for the company to pay its loans. *Elena R. Torrijos*

BSP to keep policy rates steady for the whole year

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said it would keep its overnight rates at current levels for the rest of the year saying that the low inflation rate and a stable foreign exchange rate were enough to offset any pressure to raise interest rates.

"If the inflation rate is kept at an average of 5 percent this year, there is a good chance that we will not have to do anything (on the interest rates) even if the US Fed will raise its rates later this year," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

BSP officials said a low interest rates level should lead to a more robust economic activity that, in turn, could result in higher inflation rates and a weaker local currency.

Buenaventura said the government was keeping its low inflation target. He said the rate was seen to stay below 4 percent in April.

The central bank chief, however, admitted that its overnight rates had hit the bottom at 7 percent for borrowing and 9.25 percent for lending and that monetary authorities were inclined to keep them at these levels for the rest of the year.

Buenaventura also said the BSP shelved plans to further cut the banks' reserve requirement from the current level of 16 percent at this time.

He said there was sufficient liquidity in the system to spur economic growth and that the lowering of the banks' reserve requirement would only flood the system with more cash.

DISCLOSURES

CITYLAND Development Corp. declared a 50-percent stock dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of May 18. The dividend is payable on June 17. Also, the company's annual stockholders' meeting will be on June 4 at the 3/F of Cityland Condominium 10, Makati City. Record date is on May 5.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from May to June 28 with the record date set for April 30.

* * *

SPI Technologies Inc. increased its authorized capital stock from P315 million to P500 million. The company also declared a stock dividend equivalent to P46.25 million.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. bought 1.36 million of its own shares at prices ranging from P22.5 to P25 per share. *Compiled by Maricar Tolosa, PDI Research*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, April 23, 2002)

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BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69.5	71	69.5	70	1,610,200
China Banking Corp.	630	635	630	635	2,100
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	37	38.5	36.5	37.5	546,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40	41	39.5	41	237,000
Phil. Savings Bank	29	29	29	29	5,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	22.5	22.5	22	22.5	17,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	110,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	130,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	228	228	228	228	100
Manulife Financial Corp.	1410	1425	1410	1420	5,790
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1120	1120	1110	1115	18,630
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34.5	35.5	34.5	35	49,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.61	0.61	1,760,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	805	805	805	10,850
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	250,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.046	0.044	0.044	4,500,000
Piltel	0.45	0.46	0.44	0.46	2,680,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	90,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	477.5	487.5	477.5	482.5	196,640
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	12,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	28	28	27.5	27.5	48,300
Manila Electric Co. B	46.5	46.5	44.5	45	2,416,700
Petron Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.62	1.62	1,649,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.62	1.7	1.62	1.7	1,063,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	2,511,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.35	0.4	0.35	0.4	560,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	190,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	111,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27.5	28	27.5	28	3,631,700
RFM Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.3	268,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	46.5	45.5	46.5	46,500
San Miguel Corp. B	55	55.5	54.5	55.5	1,202,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	11,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	160,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	1,903,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	92,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12	12	12	500
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.49	0.49	360,000
APC Group Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.11	1,600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	119,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.8	2.85	2.8	2.85	190,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.64	0.66	0.63	0.65	2,230,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,110,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	210,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	7	7.5	7	7.5	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.34	1.36	174,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	40,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	29.5	29.5	29	29	238,200
Global Equities Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	20,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	220,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7	7	7	5,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,360,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.83	0.84	0.83	0.84	260,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.1	0.1	1,000,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	2,030,000
Music Corp.	0.225	0.29	0.225	0.27	420,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	70,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	300,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.115	0.11	0.115	1,550,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	100,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	5,500
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.56	0.58	0.55	0.57	7,040,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	50,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.31	310,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34	36	34	35.5	824,300
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	770	770	770	770	510
Equitable PCI Bank-War	0.75	0.75	0.5	0.7	520,000
Jollibee Warrants	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	10,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	90,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	2,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	400
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.005	8,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	4,171,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	60,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	350,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.39	0.39	3,280,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	3,610,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.44	2.44	10,182,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	2.16	2.16	2.1	2.14	6,120,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	1,500,000
SM Development Corp.	0.9	0.96	0.9	0.96	300,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	12,323,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1	1	1	1	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	45,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	5,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	16,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	13,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	60,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	2,200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	500,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	610,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,685,420	174,259,800.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	278,465,700	469,703,695.00
PRO	1,562,044,238	3,385,459,227.00
Mining	71,210,000	2,100,300.00
OIL	20,390,000	258,550.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,934,795,358	4,031,781,572.00
	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	570.75	UP 3.65
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,845.37	DOWN 6.93
PRO	611.93	DOWN 10.11
Mining	1,303.31	DOWN 0.68
OIL	1.54	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	762.86	DOWN 3.42
Composite	1,369.36	DOWN 4.43.

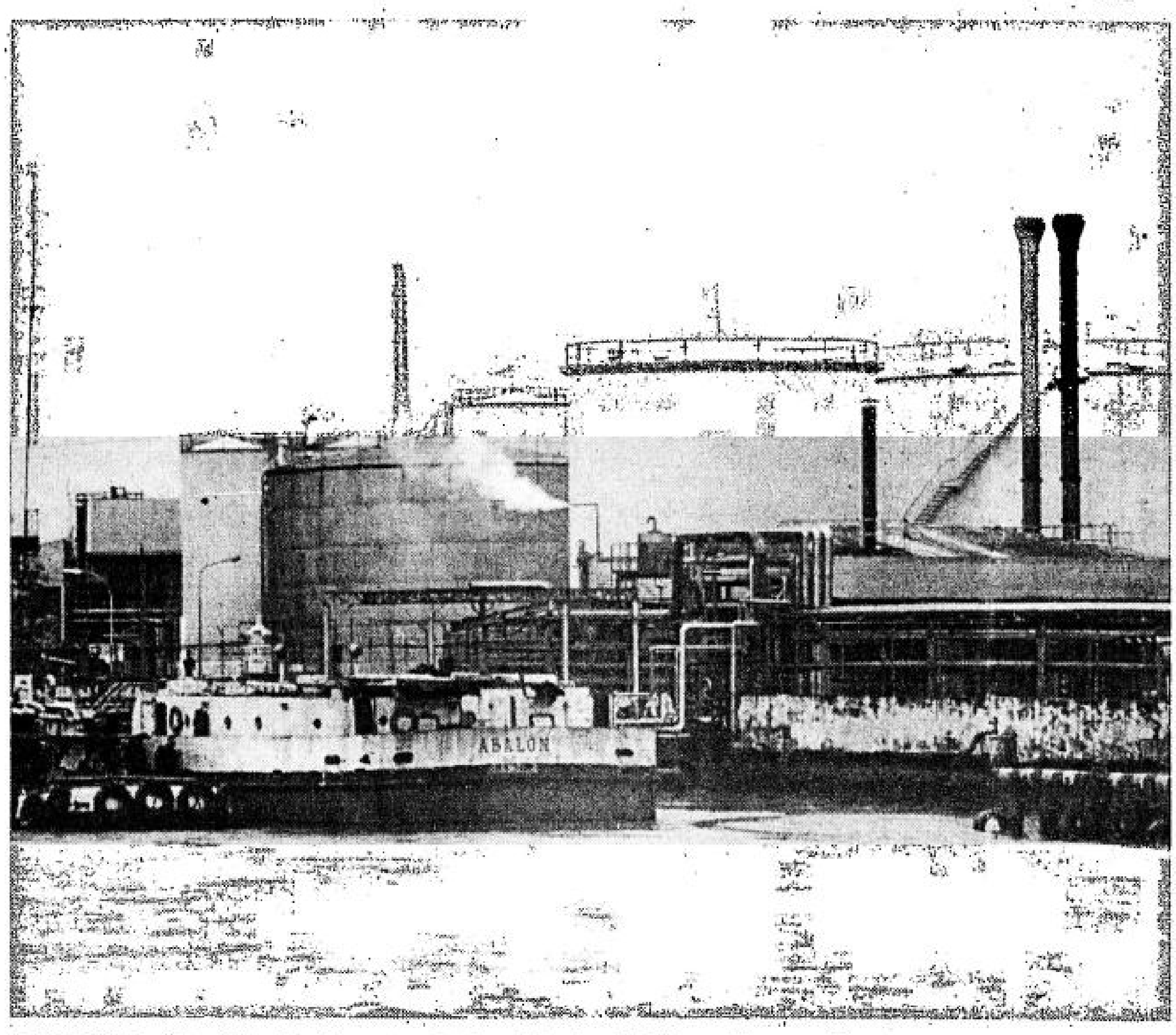
NO. OF ADVANCES: 28; NO. OF DECLINES: 42; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 44;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 114; NO. OF TRADES: 2,612

CURRENCIES

April 23, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.123974	1.000000	50.9240
Japan	Yen	0.008650	0.007696	0.3919
United Kingdom	Pound	1.630999	1.451100	73.8958
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.144114	0.128218	6.5294
Switzerland	Franc	0.680785	0.605694	30.8444
Canada	Dollar	0.715588	0.636659	32.4212
Singapore	Dollar	0.618929	0.550661	28.0419
Australia	Dollar	0.606243	0.539374	27.4671
Bahrain	Dinar	2.981523	2.652661	135.0841
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.299719	0.266660	13.5794
Brunei	Dollar	0.615708	0.547795	27.8959
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000120	0.000107	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.026000	0.023132	1.1780
UAE	Dirham	0.306018	0.272264	13.8648
Korea	Won	0.000865	0.000770	0.0392
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.889700	45.3071
Brazil	Real	0.481773	0.428633	21.8277
Denmark	Kroner	0.134559	0.119717	6.0965
India	Rupee	0.023009	0.020471	1.0425
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.295783	0.263158	13.4011
Mexico	New Peso	0.121445	0.108050	5.5023
New Zealand	Dollar	0.501640	0.446309	22.7278
Norway	Kroner	0.123234	0.116855	5.9507
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018764	0.016694	0.8501
South Africa	Rand	0.102170	0.090901	4.6290
Sweden	Kroner	0.108760	0.096764	4.9276
Syria	Pound	0.025545	0.022727	1.1573
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032345	0.028777	1.4654
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001322	0.001176	0.0599

Shell to terminate LPG operations in Pandacan



A PORTION of the 30-ha Pandacan terminal used by the Big Three oil companies.

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. said it was decommissioning the third of its three storage spheres for liquefied petroleum gas in Pandacan as part of steps to phasedown its depot.

Roberto Kanapi, Pilipinas Shell general manager for external affairs, said the firm has entered into joint-venture deals with several local firms to put up LGP refilling plants outside Metro Manila.

"The third sphere will be taken out of service within the year and we will then handle our LPG operations through the new plants," Kanapi said during a courtesy call at the INQUIRER Monday night.

He did not say how many firms they had tapped. Pilipinas Shell's Pandacan facility serves the market in and around Metro Manila.

The Pilipinas Shell official said the two other spheres had been decommissioned two or three years ago.

"We are now concentrating our activities in Pandacan on a smaller area," Kanapi said.

He explained that the move would provide a "green zone" that means a wider safety area within the depot's compound.

Pilipinas Shell's depot occupies 10.5 hectares. Petron Corp.'s and Caltex Philippines Inc.'s depots complete the 30-ha Pandacan terminal.

"We were the first to put up a terminal here in 1914 when the firm was importing kerosene," Kanapi said. "There were no communities near our depot then."

He noted that Pilipinas Shell was merely phasing down its operations in Pandacan and said that it did not want to relocate.

The Manila city government has passed an ordinance giving the three oil refiners only until June to shut down the depots.

"We are appealing to the city government to reconsider this," Kanapi said.

Industry sources said the Big Three oil firms would have to spend about P10 billion if and when the depots were to be relocated.

Last week, Petron also announced that it was phasing down operations in Pandacan in the wake of fears about the depot's safety and security.

"This is to reiterate that Petron's main concern is not only the safety of our workers but also that of the surrounding communities," Petron president Motassim Al-Ma'ashouq said in a statement.

Petron officials said the scaling down of Petron's depot operations would not reduce oil supply in Metro Manila.

About half of Petron's products is handled in Pandacan and is distributed in Metro Manila. Its Pandacan terminal also houses a lubricants plant that supplies the manufacturing and agricultural sectors.

Gov't finalizes . . .

From page B1

measure to be submitted to Congress.

At present, excise taxes on motor vehicles depend on the fuel type and the level of engine displacement, which means a stronger powered car is slapped with a higher tax.

For instance, a car with a 1.5-liter engine or lower is subjected to a 15-percent tax while heavier vehicles with a 3-liter engine or higher have to pay an excise tax of 100 penitent.

American manufacturers like Ford Motors Corp. and General Motors Corp. that produce vehicles with bigger engine displacements favor the shift in the basis to sale price.

But other companies like Toyota Motors Corp. with models carrying relatively modest-size engine displacements would prefer to maintain the current legislation.

ADB plans to issue peso bonds

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said it has approved in principle the plan of multilateral lenders like the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank to issue peso-denominated bonds to help finance the country's reform program.

"In principle, we approve of the idea and we will support it because it would be another outlet for banks that remain unwilling to lend at this point," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

The ADB is reportedly preparing to issue P2.5 billion worth of peso bonds.

Buenaventura said banks could buy the debt papers and the proceeds could be used by the ADB to lend to local industries. The BSP chief, however, cautioned that the central bank might not be in a position to load up the bonds with sweeteners such as reserve eligibility.

Only debt papers issued by the government are normally considered reserve eligible, an incentive given to the controversial 10-year zero coupon bonds auctioned by the government last year.

A debt paper qualified for reserves means that banks buying the debt notes could count its investments in those debt papers as part of the 16-percent mandatory deposits required by the BSP to be placed in its vaults.

The ADB said yesterday it might start issuing local currency bonds in the Philippines, Thailand and India to minimize currency risk when it provides project funding.

"We have been in discussion with the three countries on a framework in which we can issue local currency bonds and put the proceeds to use in private sector projects in need of local currency," ADB assistant treasurer Juanito Limandribata told Reuters in an interview.

The ADB traditionally extends US dollar, yen and euro-denominated loans for project financing. Issuing local currency bonds could help cushion the effects of exchange rate volatility.

"It's basically the need for a match in the currency between the revenue generated by the project and the debt assumed by the project company," Limandribata said.

"Another aim of the plan was to help deepen the capital markets of the countries involved," he added.

"We have a bond market development objective."

Limandribata said the ADB would not limit the proposal to the Philippines, Thailand and India, but these three had been chosen initially "because of the projects they have in the pipeline."

In the Philippines, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and Department of Finance have reportedly started talks with the ADB on the sale of up to P2.5 billion worth of bonds.

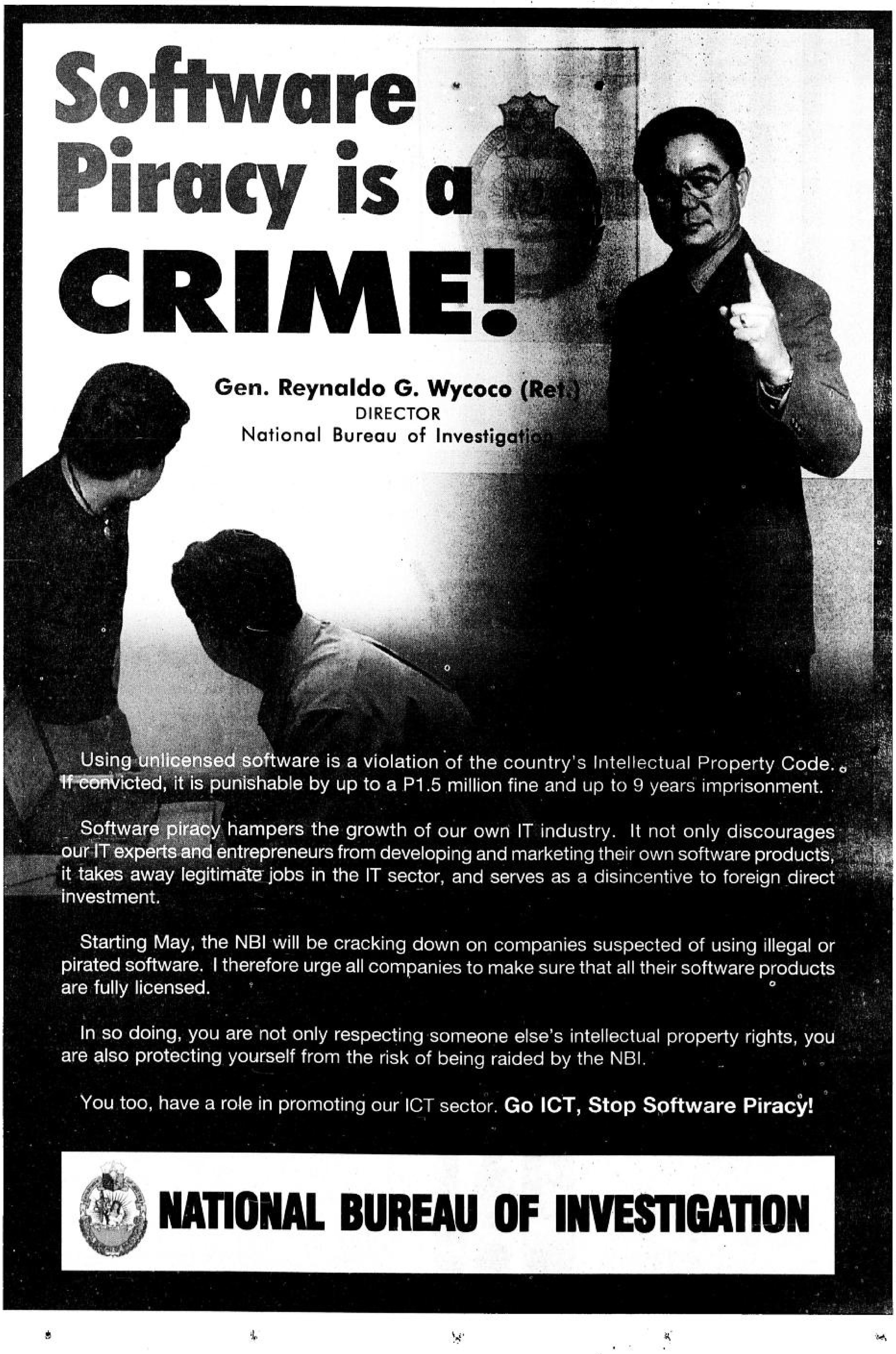
Limandribata said the discussions with Philippine authorities had been "positive" but the idea was still at the proposal stage with no decision made on the timing or amount of issues.

Buenaventura recalled that a multilateral agency had, at one time, issued peso bonds but lent out the proceeds in dollars.

"We did not like the idea of floating in pesos but re-lending in dollars," said Buenaventura.

The BSP chief said the ADB has not sought the Monetary Board's approval for the bond issue although he believed it was already discussing the plan with his deputies.

Any foreign institution issuing local bonds would have to secure the Monetary Board's approval the same way that any resident, whether government-owned or private firms, planning to borrow dollars would have to get the go-ahead of the BSP. *With a report from Reuters*



Software Piracy is a CRIME!

Gen. Reynaldo G. Wycoco (Ret.)
DIRECTOR
National Bureau of Investigatio

Using unlicensed software is a violation of the country's Intellectual Property Code. If convicted, it is punishable by up to a P1.5 million fine and up to 9 years imprisonment.

Software piracy hampers the growth of our own IT industry. It not only discourages our IT experts and entrepreneurs from developing and marketing their own software products, it takes away legitimate jobs in the IT sector, and serves as a disincentive to foreign direct investment.

Starting May, the NBI will be cracking down on companies suspected of using illegal or pirated software. I therefore urge all companies to make sure that all their software products are fully licensed.

In so doing, you are not only respecting someone else's intellectual property rights, you are also protecting yourself from the risk of being raided by the NBI.

You too, have a role in promoting our ICT sector. **Go ICT, Stop Software Piracy!**

NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

AFTER FIRST YEAR IN POWER

Faith in Koizumi's reform promises withers

TOKYO—Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi stormed into office promising sweeping reforms to Japan's stuttering economy but a year later the hopes of long suffering Japanese have withered.

Last year, expectations of a recovery sky-rocketed after the maverick politician took office on April 26, pledging to sweep away the sacred cows which had left the country wallowing in a decade-long slump.

He promised to fix the mountain of bad loans choking banks, privatize key state businesses, trim government spending and open protected areas of the economy to competition.

But it was not long before the euphoria surrounding the outspoken premier turned to disappointment, and many economists now doubt his ability to pull the world's second biggest economy out of decline.

"Prospects for greater achievements in Koizumi's second year are lower than in his first," said Richard Jerram, chief economist at ING Barings.

"Looking forward, there is no realistic hope that Koizumi will be able to provide a solution to Japan's problems."

Masatoshi Sato, senior strategist at Mizuho Investors Securities, said: "The market and investors thought Koizumi was the man who could save the country, which had been deadlocked in many ways. But they soon realized it was an illusion."

"Koizumi-magic" saw Tokyo share prices close at their high for the year just four business days after he took office. But by Feb. 6 of this year, the Nikkei-225 average of the Tokyo Stock Exchange sank to an 18-year low amid deepening gloom over the economy.

"The market is now urging Koizumi to take concrete and visible action, including tax cuts," Sato said.

His biggest task—banks' massive burden of bad loans, seen as a root cause of Japan's prolonged slump—appears as intractable as ever.

This month the Financial Services Agency completed a special inspection into Japan's banking sector, which forced major banks to write off bad loans worth 7.8 trillion yen ($60 billion) in the year to March.

This was 1.9 trillion yen more than promised by the banks before the announcement of the inspection.

But analysts argue the pace of bad-loan disposals is still too slow, with Japanese banks still buried under 36.8 trillion yen worth according to Tokyo's conservative estimate. *AFP*

Greenspan sees early signs of spending revival, but warns economic rebound would be modest

NEW YORK—Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan said on Monday he saw early signs of a revival in crucial US business spending and added that the tide may be turning for hard-hit corporate profitability.

However, the Fed chief warned that the rebound in corporate investment was unlikely to be rapid and reiterated his belief that the pace of broader economic resurgence would be modest.

Business investment in new buildings and equipment is crucial to a solid recovery in the US economy because there will not be the same degree of pent-up consumer demand as in past rebounds from recession.

"It is left therefore to capital investment to carry final demand in this economy forward and, as I think we are all aware, the sharp reduction in capital investment in recent quarters has been driven largely by a marked contraction in corporate profitability," Greenspan told the Institute of International Finance in New York.

"That appears to be changing at this particular stage and we're seeing the early signs of a recovery in capital investment," he added during questioning, after speaking via satellite to the group's conference.

Yet Greenspan cautioned: "I would be doubtful that the recovery is going to be rapid and in general (of) the overall economic recovery being rapid."

His take on business spending, coming in the midst of the US first-quarter earnings period, was more upbeat than that he offered last week in congressional testimony.

At that time, he cited signs of an increase in final demand, and said: "To the extent that businesses are successful in boosting profits and cash flow, capital spending should begin to recover more noticeably."

His testimony to Congress' Joint Economic Committee was seen by markets as ruling out imminent interest-rate rises.

The Fed cut rates 11 times in 2001 to four-decade lows to revive an economy hit by a business-spending led downturn and the Sept. 11 attacks. Many economists expect it to begin reversing those reductions once the recovery hits its stride.

On Monday, he remained wary about the outlook for economic demand but predicted longer-term growth would be stronger than in the past—chiefly because of technological innovation.

"The interim period, obviously, is subject to much of the question of how quickly capital investment will kick in but over the much longer time-frame, the outlook does appear to have improved," Greenspan said. *Reuters*

Standard and Poor's downgrades Indonesia

JAKARTA—Standard and Poor's said Tuesday it has cut Indonesia's sovereign foreign currency credit rating to selective default (SD) after the Paris Club of creditor nations' move to reschedule $5.4 billion in government debt.

S and P's long-term foreign currency rating for Indonesia was previously CCC, while the short-term rating was C.

At the same time, the global ratings agency lowered its rating on the government's 1995 standby $500-million syndicated loan, due in December 2013, to D from CCC.

It also reaffirmed its CCC rating on the $400 million in Yankee bonds maturing in 2006.

Indonesia's other foreign currency bank loans had their ratings cut to CCC- from CCC.

In a statement, S and P said it maintained its negative outlook on its B- long-term local currency rating, and has affirmed its C short-term local currency sovereign credit ratings on the country.

"This is the third time in three years that Standard and Poor's has lowered Indonesia's sovereign credit rating to 'SD' following the imposition of 'comparability of treatment' under Paris Club rules," Takahira Ogawa, S and P sovereign ratings head in Asia, said.

"The long-term foreign currency issuer credit rating will remain at 'SD' pending a review of the documentation on the rescheduled syndicated loan, as well as further information as to whether the other syndicated bank loans will be rescheduled."

The agency's sovereign ratings team deputy head, John Chambers, said the exclusion of the Yankee bonds from the Paris Club III deal improved prospects for the government's eventual return to the capital markets.

"However, the terms were less favorable than those received by Pakistan, which was not obliged to reschedule its commercial debt in its December 2001 Paris Club agreement, and general government debt to GDP (gross domestic product) will remain high in Indonesia, projected at 100 percent of GDP at year-end 2002," he said. *AFP*

Gates: Court could cripple Microsoft

WASHINGTON—For the first time in Microsoft's four-year antitrust battle, Bill Gates took the witness stand Monday and personally chastised states for seeking penalties he said would cripple the American software giant.

With a mix of computer slide shows and short, calm answers, Gates sought to rebut the arguments of nine states that have asked a court to further punish Microsoft for operating an illegal monopoly that hurt competitors and consumers.

Gates offered no apologies for his company's business practices. Instead, he portrayed Microsoft's flagship Windows software as the epicenter of innovation in America's computer revolution—a revolution that would be stifled by the states' proposed penalties, hurting consumers and the wider industry.

"The (remedies) would turn back the clock on Windows development and effectively freeze it there," Gates testified at one point, delivering in person the warnings that Microsoft has made for months in court documents.

He said the health of the personal computer "ecosystem depends in substantial part upon the continued health of and improvements to Windows."

At one point, he suggested Microsoft might need to lay off half of its 15,000 workers or pull Windows from the marketplace as fallout from the proposed penalties.

"The practical effect . . . would be to cripple Microsoft as a technology company," Gates wrote in 150 pages of written testimony that was submitted along with his appearance.

Gates' performance Monday contrasted sharply from his 1998 videotaped testimony that became a key piece of evidence in the first phase of the antitrust trial. Gates was criticized for appearing fidgety, evasive and combative in that tape.

On Monday, he spurned his customary casual attire for a traditional blue suit and purple tie and brought his wife to the courtroom.

Under intense questioning by states' lawyer Steven Kuney, the Microsoft chair occasionally chuckled before taking issue with definitions or assumptions. He was to return Tuesday for more questioning.

Gates began his testimony with a computer-generated slideshow. He demonstrated how, if the states successfully persuaded a court to force Microsoft to remove the Internet Explorer Web browser, essential components of Windows would stop working.

"This shows that if you remove this block of code, other functions are degraded in the most extreme way. They no longer work," Gates said, referring to the removal of the Explorer software.

In his written testimony, Gates exhaustively countered every argument the states had made in favor of penalties. During cross examination, the states' lawyers sought to turn his words to their advantage.

At one point, Kuney challenged Gates' assertion that Microsoft does all it can to disclose technical information so software developers can write programs that work well with Microsoft products. *AP*

Enron estimates $14B write-down

HOUSTON—Enron Corp. on Monday said that up to $24 billion in assets and derivative values could be erased from its books, potentially shaving 38 percent off the total assets the energy trader listed when it filed its record bankruptcy last year.

The Houston-based firm said the $14 billion in potential asset write-downs may have resulted from "possible accounting errors or irregularities" that overstated their value, pointing a clear finger at former auditor Andersen and prior management.

Enron also warned of a possible reduction of between $8 billion to $10 billion related to the unwinding of some of its myriad derivatives contracts. Several observers have said Enron's derivative book was hiding several nasty surprises that would surface when its underlying contracts were unwound.

The asset write-downs, Enron said, were not presented to the board of directors' audit committee. Some of the loss in value is related to the discount that a bankruptcy filing nearly always places on a debtor's assets.

The potential write-downs were disclosed in a bankruptcy document filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission, and represented a further setback for disappointed Enron creditors.

Analyst John Olson of Houston investment bank Sanders Morris Harris said the erasure of $14 billion from the roughly $61.5 billion in assets Enron claimed when it filed bankruptcy was "staggering."

Enron listed liabilities of $49 billion at the time of its filing, but has since said that its liabilities could reach $100 billion.

"No matter how cynical you would have been about Enron, it's defied all of them in terms of being worse than imagined," Olson said. "They were making it up as they were going along apparently, but $14 billion is real dollars. This thing is just a staggering number to me."

Olson, an early critic of Enron and one of the first to sound the derivatives alarm, said the reduction would erase about half of the $18.7 billion in paper derivative value Enron said it had when it filed its record bankruptcy on Dec. 2.

"It's like building a bird's nest. You take away a twig and the bird's nest goes kaput," Olson said. "Enron had a lot of paper value. When the stress test came along, a lot of the paper blew away." *Reuters*

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **ALFREDO PREPUSE** was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 331, Page No. 2, Book No. 7, Series of 2002 under Notary Public Atty. Cipriano A. Almazan.
(PDI-April 24, May 1 & 8, 2002)

PERSONAL

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INΘYIPEP TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

First plastic

Q. When was the first plastic made?

A. Chemists knew about and had worked with plastics as early as the mid-1800's. Vinyl chloride was polymerized in 1838, styrene in 1839, acrylics in 1843, and polyster in 1847. But at that time there was no particular need for these synthetic materials. In 1870, looking for a substitute for ivory, American brothers John and Isiah Hyatt discovered celluloid. This was a new, tough, easily made and shaped material and resisted many chemicals, and it inspired chemists to think about developing additional synthetic materials. In 1909 the Belgian-American chemist Leo Baekeland discovered phenol-formaldehyde, the first of a type of plastics called thermosetting plastics. This new material was not dissolved by ordinary solvents; it could be molded into any shape, it did not conduct electricity, and was inexpensive. Bakelite, as Baekeland named the product (after himself), was the first entirely synthetic material to be produced in large quantities.

Name Game. Tupperware. The name of the familiar plastic houseware is based on that of Earl S. Tupper, an American chemist from New Hampshire who opened a factory in Massachusetts in 1937 and began producing the distinctive food and drink containers in 1942.

Past Forward. This day in 1895: Captain Joshua Slocum set forth from Bristol, England, in his sloop *Spray* in a bold attempt to become the first man to sail around the world single-handed. Slocum, an American non-swimmer, completed his historic circumnavigation on July 3, 1898, having covered a total distance of 140,028 kilometers (46,000 mi).

WORD WATCH

Ikot : from the Malay *ikut,* "to follow."

PDI -- April 24, 2002

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INVITATION TO APPLY ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI) is inviting all interested bidders for our forthcoming public bidding for:

6,000mCi Iodine-131, NaI solution for oral administration

Issuance of Eligibility requirements	:	**April 25, 2002**
Pre-bid conference	:	To be announced later
Bidding	:	To be announced later

The approved budget is Four Hundred Eighty Thousand Pesos (480,000.00)

For inquiries interested parties may contact the PBAC Secretariat at Tel. Nos. **929-6011 to 19** loc. 275 (c/o Julie Mendoza).

The Bids and Awards Committee and the Institute reserve the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect thereto, accept bids as may be deemed advantageous thereto or postpone the bidding for whatever cause it may deem proper.

In case of failure, a re-bidding shall automatically be scheduled five (5) calendar days after the announcement of failed bidding at the same time and place as the first bidding.

(Sgd.) **ALUMANDA M. DELA ROSA, Ph.D.**
Acting Director

(PDI - April 24, 2002)

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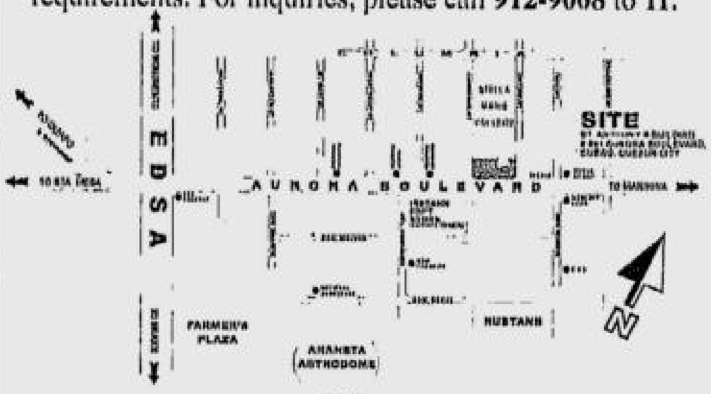

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BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS
In Compliance of RA 7041

EVALUATION INVESTIGATION GROUP

Evaluation and Preliminary Investigation Bureau

GRAFT INVESTIGATION OFFICER I

Item No. OMBA-GIO1-50-1998; SG-26; Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: 3 years of experience in the practice of law, counselling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related work; Training: None required; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR).

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION GROUP

Public Assistance Bureau

COMPUTER OPERATOR III

Item No. OMBA-COMPO3-1-1998; SG-12; Education: Completion of two years studies in College or High School Graduate with relevant vocational/trade course; Experience: 2 years of relevant experience; Training: 8 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service (Subprofessional) Data Encoder (MC 11,s.96-Cat. I) First Level Eligibility.

CLERK III

Item No. OMBA-CK3-27-1998; SG-6; Education: Completion of two years studies in college; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: Career Service Subprofessional; First Level Eligibility.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

Central Records Division

RECORDS OFFICER III

Item No. OMBA-RO3-2-1998; SG-18; Education: Bachelor's degree; Experience: 2 years of relevant experience; Training: 8 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service (Professional). Second Level Eligibility.

Interested applicant should submit on or before **May 17, 2002** to the Human Resource Management Division, at the above address an application letter stating the position item applied for, duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212), "1x1" picture (colored), Certificate of Eligibility, Transcript of Records, Certificate of Seminar/Training attended (CSC accredited) and Certification from previous/present employment stating the position actual duties and responsibilities.

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

LB Manila wins RP's 1st gold in Aspac adfest

LEO BURNETT Manila has emerged as the top Filipino agency at the recent Asia Pacific Adfest in Thailand, where it won the Philippines' first-ever gold.

The gold in the film category went to McDonald's "Lolo", for which LB Manila has also been reaping awards locally.

The premier advertising awards show in Asia Pacific, the Adfest is the regional equivalent of such global shows as Cannes and Clio.

Aside from the gold, LB Manila also won a bronze for its Bengay "Japanese" TVC, which had received recognition at the London International, New York Festival, and Time Asia.

The awards made Bengay and McDonald's top in the Philippines' 102 entries in the adfest, where 2,400 entries from the region competed for recognition. The only two other Philippine winners were O&M and BBDO, with each getting a bronze. And with LB Manila's gold and bronze, the Philippines came out 6th in Asia, the highest the country has ever been placed in the competition.

Such a trademark of creative excellence has distinguished Leo Burnett among the world's advertising agencies. The most creative agency network in the world, according to the Gunn Report 2001, and the winner of Media Magazine's coveted Asia Agency of the Year 2001, Leo Burnett's mission is to be "the best in the world, bar none, at turning brand buyers into brand believers." The agency does so utilizing its proprietary Brand Relief System.

CAPRI BAGS 3 GOLD QUILL AWARDS

Campaigns Advocacy and PR Inc. (Capri) was bestowed with two excellence and one merit awards in the recently concluded International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), Philippine Chapter Gold Quill Awards. Capri garnered excellence for its integrated communication support program for 'Vot For D Champp', the People Power Coalition senatorial campaign during the 2001 election; and the advocacy song 'Kasali Ka, Sumali Ka,' the theme music of last year's Code-NGO Social Development Week celebration. The marketing communication program in support of the event was also given meritorious citation. The three awards for Capri were received by (from left) Adee Caluag, account supervisor, Eric Gutierrez, art director, Apple Cortez, account executive, Marilyn Villapando, general manager, and Bong Osorio, president. Not shown were Tony Oquias, creative director, and Lorie Dionisio, media relations executive.

BITS & Clips

St. Augustine School Tagudin reunion

THERE will be a reunion on May 11 and 12 of former high school students and graduates of St. Augustine's School, Tagudin, Ilocos Sur. Dubbed "SAS Kidday ken Kablaaw 2002," the affair will not only provide an opportunity to meet and renew ties with former schoolmates, but will also solicit support for the programs undertaken to help the school continue its mission and vision. Interested parties can call Loreta Ulpindo-Corpuz (077-7487197, 0919-8260915), Elma Reyes-Follusco (074-4443878), Jane Bang-og-Cosalan (074-4423209, 0919-3283004), Alice Valencia-Hizo (776-1869, 0919-46550349), Mae Zabala-Uclaray (372-3188, 0917-6451784), or Anselma Udayan-Pascual (929-2095, 0917-9943778).

Finex seminar on RP interest rate

THE FINANCIAL Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex) invites the public to attend the seminar on "Philippine Interest Rate—Is This For Real?" on April 24, Wednesday, 2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Bahia, 14th floor of the Hotel Intercontinental Manila, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Invited speakers are Sergio G. Edeza, National Treasurer, Armando M. Tetangco, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and Dr. Johnny Noe E. Ravalo, past chief economist of BAP. For inquiries, call the Finex secretariat care of Analyn Viloria at 811-4184, 811-4186, or 811-4052, or e-mail avviloria@finex.org.ph.

Entrepreneurial success from Aussie billionaire

ENTREPRENEURIAL studies, called "Keys to Your Business Success", will be sponsored by the Cathedral of Praise from April 26 through May 2. This once-in-a-lifetime training opportunity is designed to make dreams live.

Guest speaker Peter J. Daniels will inspire aspiring business owners to "make it happen." Current business executives in all fields will be taught how to reach the heights of their respective careers.

A self-made Australian billionaire, Daniels trains entrepreneurs from a Christian perspective. He is president and founder of the World Centre for Entrepreneurial Studies. He is also the director of the International Corporate Holdings Pty Ltd and the chair of the Australia Fair Pty Ltd (a strategic intelligence and bullion company).

Daniels came from a disadvantaged background, and his early years were plagued with illiteracy and ignorance. Yet, he built a large business in real estate in Australia with Southeast Asian connections, and served on international boards covering the all corners of the globe.

For over three decades, he had successfully studied, absorbed, and experienced first-hand the elusive field of business, and had worked with some of the most dynamic corporate and intellectual giants of the 20th century.

He is personally wealthy, and has a "no debt" philosophy. He is committed to the free enterprise system within benevolent boundaries, and subject to strong principles. He has authored 13 books, and has created numerous business programs throughout the world. He is one of the world's highest paid strategic planners and public speakers.

The seminar will be held at the Cathedral of Praise Auditorium at 350 Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila. The sessions run from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on April 26, 29, 30, May 1 and 2; a whole-day session on April 27 and a half-day session on April 28. Admission is free, but registration is required.

CALTEX PROMO WINNER

The awarding of the grand prize of the 'Magkarga at Magkakwarta sa Caltex' Southern Tagalog region promo was held April 3. The winner, Banjo de Gala, won P200,000. Shown from left are Estrellyn de Gala, husband winner Banjo, Arnel Opeña, Bugtong na Pulo, Lipa City Caltex retailer, Tito Bocanegra, Luzon south retail district manager, and Roy Macapagal, field manager.

BMAP sets meet

THE BANK Marketing Association of the Philippines (BMAP) holds its general membership meeting at the Shangri-La Hotel this Thursday, April 25. The invited speaker for the luncheon meeting is Olen Lim. Taking up the subject Corporate Image Management, Lim will share her knowledge and experience on the creation of a positive impression for a bank. Members and other marketing professionals interested in enhancing the image of their institution are encouraged to attend. For reservations, call Alice at 890-6325 or 896-1893.

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"You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence of living with you forever." *Psalm 16:11 (NLB)*

Our Beloved Mama

GO WUN CHING y ONG

Peacefully joined our Lord
and her husband the late ***Ong Bi Cheong***
on April 20, 2002 at the age of 90.

Her bereaved children **Tiek Beng** (†) and **Emilia Dy**, **Tiek Guan** and **Sally Kang**, **Allen** and **Corazon Chua**, **Cecilia** and **Michael Velasco**, **Cotaminda** and **Nelson Chua**, **Leanne** and **Peter Li**, **Rev. Tony** (**Tiek Chiao**) and **Normita Sy**, **Hannah** and **Greg Haskell**; grandchildren **Eugene**, **Jenny & Mark**, **Edmund & Ana Mary**, **Eric & Desiree**, **Emmanuel & Gladice**, **Evian**, **Allan**, **Alvin**, **Albert**, **Clement & Rowena**, **Candice**, **Clifton**, **Chester**, **Cleaver**, **Oliver**, **Tricia**, **Joel**, **Lynnette**, **Laura**, **Timothy**, **Kristobelle**, **Abigail**, **Andrew**, **Nathan**, **Stacey**; and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be held on Friday, April 26, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, after service at 9:00 a.m.

A Message of Thanks

The Family of the late

SOCORRO MEDINO SIOZON

of
Tacloban City
Who peacefully joined our Lord
on April 5, 2002
wish to thank those who cared
for her, offered Masses and
prayers, sent flowers and
who in countless ways condoled with
us in our moment
of sorrow and grief.

Our Beloved

RENATO GAGARIN ZERRUDO

of Marilao, Bulacan

A faithful loving father to his children
peacefully joined our Lord on April 20, 2002
at the age of 45.

We, the parents **Buddy** and **Cion**, siblings **Beth**, **Nelia**, **Toto**, **Utchie** and in-laws and children **Rona** and **Andrew** express our very warm and grateful thanks to those who assisted and bereaved with us on this occassion, further requesting the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Zerrudo residence, San Antonio St. Rosaryville, Sta. Cruz, Guiginto, Bulacan.

Interment will take place on Thursday, 1:00 p.m., April 25, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Bulacan.

"WHOEVER serves me must follow Me;
and where I am, My servant also will be."
John 12:16

VINCENT DAYRIT RIVERA

of Davao City and Alameda, California

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 21, 2002
at the age of 67 in Alameda, California, USA.

His loving wife **GLORIA** and son **JOSE ELMER**, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends request those whose lives have been touched by our beloved Vince to pray and offer Masses for the repose of his soul as he is reborn to Eternal Life.

A memorial service will be held at the St. Albert Church in Alameda on April 25, 2002.

His remains will be cremated and flown to Davao City at a later date.

LARRY D. QUINTANS

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 7, 2002
at the age of 63.

His father **Lt. Col. Segundino S. Quintans** (†); mother **Rose**; sister **Isabelita**; wife **Chit**; children **Pamela & Sammy**, **Camille & Mark**, **Claire**, **Dino**; grandchildren **Chloe**, **Carlo**, **Diego & Spencer**; nephew and nieces request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains were cremated at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque last April 14, 2002.

Col. Jaime O. Ilagan (Ret.)

PMA Class '55, Mapa HS Class '49

Died on April 23, 2002 at the age of 71.

His wife **Remedios**, children **Rowena** and **Eduardo**; grandchildren **Kathleen** and **James**, and brothers and sisters request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the St. Ignatius Pro-Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo. The schedule of cremation will be announced later.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life and I shall live in
the house of the Lord forever."
Psalms 23:6

Our Dearly Beloved Mommy

BEATRIZ "BETTY" MARTIN

June 25, 1928 - April 22, 2002

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 22nd day of April 2002 at the age of 73.

Her loving husband **Gov. Tomas S. Martin**; her loving children **Tessie & Freddie Vitug**, **Boy & Patty Martin**, **Junior & Fanny Martin**, and **Bibot & Remy Martin**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, sisters, in-laws, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at 461 J.P. Rizal St., San Sebastian, Hagonoy, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Thursday, April 25, 2002 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

JOSE T. PADAOAN

Oct. 5, 1919 - April 22, 2002

His wife **Virginia Lazo**; children **Jose Jr.** (†) and **Lydia**, **Edgardo** and **Letty**, **Rolando** and **Linda**, **Zenaida** and **Jose Mariquina**, **Bella**, **Rosario** and **Ronillo Bautista** and grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 27, 2002, at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 am Mass at San Roque Parish Church, Mandaluyong City.

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Genesis 1:3

The Family of the late

LOURDES CASTRO SIOPONGCO

of Mabalacat, Pampanga

acknowledges with sincere appreciation and heartfelt
gratitude to all those who offered prayers and Masses,
sent flowers and messages of sympathy, spoken and
unspoken, visited and kept vigil in the hour of our grief
and sorrow and have extended their support and
services in so many ways.

We thank you for all the comfort you have shared
with us during our time of bereavement.
We will always cherish them with all our minds
and hearts.

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Low college grades haunt job seeker

By Tita Datu Puangco

I KNOW I'm smart and versatile, but my grades in college embarrass me. I had always thought I didn't deserve them. Although I still managed to complete my course in four years, I still get that squirmy feeling every time I show my college records with my resume to future employers. It's like confidently walking in to auditions only to be exposed halfway by my Bs, C+s and some subjects that I flunked and retook. After looking at my grades, people look at me differently and change their minds about me.

For five years, I've been in a stable company but my job doesn't fulfill me. I was accepted in my present job because I scored high in the company exams and good academic records were not high in their list of qualifications.

I've been planning to switch careers but the thought of anyone looking at my grades stops me from pursuing what I want. Tell me if my fear is unfounded because I really need to hear what someone like you would say about this.

Embarrassed Employee

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

Congratulations for confronting your fear. Facing your fear is a very important step towards greater self-empowerment. Now, let us take a close look at your problem. Why should future employers be concerned about what appears in the transcript of records? Often, if one is a fresh graduate, it provides them information about the person's attitude towards work. Good grades indicate diligence, hard work and taking responsibility. Having good grades, however, is not a guarantee that the person will succeed on the job. In fact, a lot of experts say that emotional intelligence may even be more critical than IQ.

Current competencies

You have been in your current job the past five years. I suggest you prepare your resume to reflect the competencies and skills you have acquired the past years. You don't have to submit your transcript of records unless your future employer asks for it. There are many employers out there who would give more weight to your current competencies and your performance during the job interview.

Recently, my daughter asked me to read a book entitled, "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" by Robert T. Kyosaki. While I do not subscribe to all the values that underpin the ideas in the book, I have to agree that the key principles he outlines on how to succeed in a capitalist society are valid. It will make you realize that good grades may not be the only passport to material success. It is the understanding of the workings of the world of finance and investment that will.

Learning from past

What can we do when we regret something we have done in the past? We can learn from it but we don't have to carry the baggage of the negative experience in the present. The past is past, it will never come back. What is important is to live the present moment well. It is in the present moment where all possibilities for achievement exist.

I am a great believer in gaining greater knowledge of one's self. In corporate planning, they talk of doing a SWOT. You can do your personal SWOT. Make a list of your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Then, ask your self: How do I build on my strengths? How do I overcome my weaknesses? How do I minimize or neutralize the threats? And how do I maximize my opportunities? This exercise leads you to develop your own personal career strategies and development plans.

Discovery of mission

Another step you can take is to clarify and discover your own personal mission and vision. Mission refers to the specific task or calling that a person is sent to perform. When we are in a job that fulfills our vision and mission, we experience much fulfillment and joy at work.

I like very much the simple questions proposed by author Laurie Beth Jones to discover your vision and mission. What most excites you about the world? What most angers you about the world? If you could teach three things to others, what would you teach? How can you use what most excites you to affect or change what most angers you? Developing your vision and mission statement will help you make decisions about your future work. It will also tell you what is authentic about your life and help you discard what is false. You will also realize that jobs are simply means to achieve greater good.

In the meantime, take care to do a good job everyday in your current work. What you accomplish and how you perform in the current job is more crucial than your grades in college. It pays to leave a legacy of wholesome attitude and solid achievement with whatever company you work for.

We encourage our readers to write to *anxiouspeopleatwork@yahoogroup.com* for your comments and feedback. We have created the opportunity for you to have your views heard. You will surely enrich our continuing conversations on problems and challenges at work. God bless you.

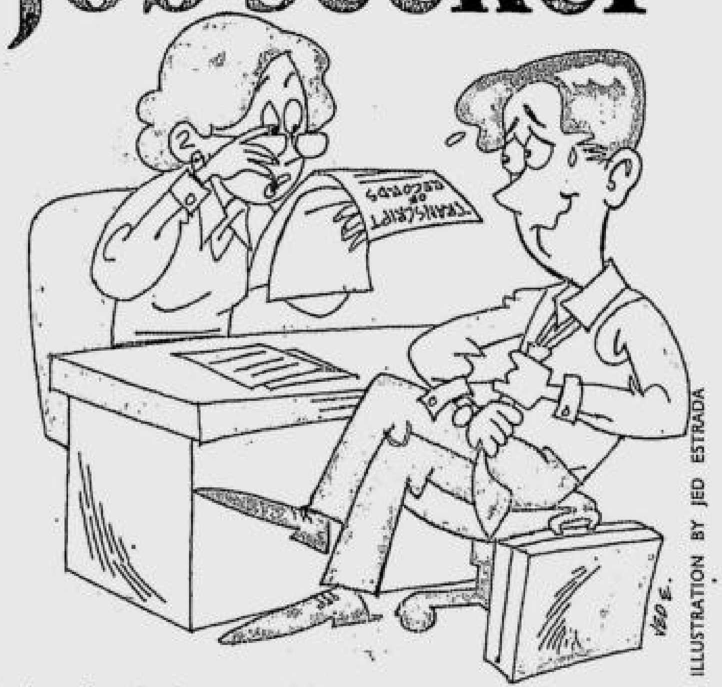

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

Work plus fun equals productivity

RECIPES *for* **LEARNING**
Moje Ramos Aquino

IN MY TV interview, I was asked, "Does humor serve a purpose at work?" My answer was a definite "yes" accompanied with a loud guffaw! Humor makes people productive. Employees who have fun are able to release tensions that allow them to concentrate on their work more effectively. Happy and well-balanced people contribute to high productivity and teamwork.

A good laugh every now and then counteracts boredom and reduces personal conflicts. When employees enjoy interacting with their fellow employees, they have a reduced need to get social support from outside the office. They tend to be more appreciative of the moment. They tend to take good care of themselves. They go with the "flow." They have positive and good relationships. They have a spiritual component that brings joy and faith in their lives. They have the ability to play and enjoy all that life has to offer. They balance their time among work, family, self, faith and others.

Therefore, happy employees contribute to the profits of the company. They have the interest of the company in mind because they know that they are valued and cherished part of the company. They are more creative and show more motivation. They work cooperatively in teams as they help push towards the organization vision, mission, values and goals. They are open to ideas and reason. They are dedicated and loyal. They look forward to work each morning, ready to face the day with vigor and enthusiasm and pitch in wholeheartedly.

What are the signs that tell you people are unproductive and bored? They spend their time calling and talking to others about everything but work. They spend their forwarding all those e-mails or simply surfing the Net or playing computer games. They goof off and stay away from their workstation. Some bring their favorite fiction book and read them at work. Bored people are unproductive, dishonest and intrigue-prone.

However, bear in mind that not all humorous activities are positive. Rude, crude and physically dangerous jokes are counterproductive. Jokes are rude when it insults others or makes fun of people instead of situations. Jokes are crude when it is done in the middle of a busy day. Jokes also become physically dangerous like when a chair is removed from someone about to take a seat. Jokes become counterproductive like hiding a co-worker's tools or shoes or erasing somebody's desktop icons.

Healthy fun

Good, clean and healthy fun at the workplace fills the needs of employees other than money. Here are some low-cost fun and energizing strategies to boost productivity and teamwork:

- Organize a sports tournament.
- Have Customer Service Awards for "extras" they do for the customer at little or no cost to the company.
- Give ABCD awards for doing a job above and beyond the call of duty immediately after it happens or even as it is happening. Philippine Airlines gives out Great Gal/ Great Pal awards very generously.
- Have a weekly or monthly incentive program that is directly related to the job. Bank of Commerce and Landbank honor their tellers with no shortages at the close of banking hours with free lunches or chocolates.
- Invite your co-employees to an *ihaw-ihaw* night in your house. Ask them to bring drinks or salad or any food.
- Treat everybody to a movie, theater presentation or concert. This is a fun way to teach social etiquette.
- Bring in a masseuse and treat everyone to a 30-minute massage after a particularly busy day, week or month.
- Have a kid's day or half-day and allow employees to bring their children to work. Prepare lots of colors, scratch papers, pencils, magazines to keep their hands busy while their moms and dads are at work.
- Do noontime walks or exercise sessions to boost energy and morale.
- Do away with drab uniforms. Use bright-colored fabric and not the lackluster and drab grays, blacks, browns, grayed blues, etc.

Celebration

- Celebrate truly important moments within the organization.
- Have a company outing.
- Adopt crazy theme days.
- Set up a computer database where employees can log on to read jokes.
- Personalize the workplace. Allot a space for family pictures or personal collections. C-Cube Services has its Freedom Wall where employees hang their personal works of art, e.g. paintings, framed poems, etc.
- Set up fun props and desk signs. Have your baby pictures as name signs to your cubicles.
- Have a bulletin board and fun corner.
- Use rainbow and bright-colored chairs and other office furniture.
- Set up a nap room where anybody could rest anytime.

Employees' center

- Establish employee centers with TV sets, games and computers for personal use and others. Philippine Daily Inquirer and Yasaki-Torres Inc. offer this amenity. PDI has crafts, mountaineering, camera and fitness clubs open to all employees. These clubs manage their own affairs.
- Have fun meetings. At the PAL Development Center, we used to have theme meetings and we come in appropriate costumes. One time, we had a "rap session" and the whole meeting was conducted "rap-style" with appropriate "rap music." Of course, we were properly garbed as rap artists.
- Adopt a theme office décor like summer, Valentine's, etc.
- Treat them to your own products for free or discounted rate.
- Create a Holiday Committee to be in-charge of all fun activities.
- Do charity work outside the office on official time.

The important thing is, have fun at work! Have fun at home too. Parents set the happy tone of their family life. Share with us the fun things you do that lead to your organization or family's financial and emotional well being.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com.*)*

How do you handle objections when trying to make a sale?

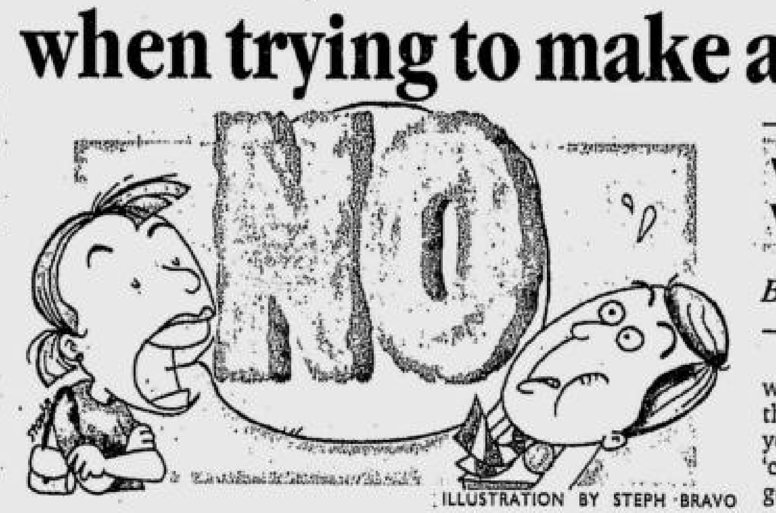

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

WORKING WOUNDED
Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: My company's sales training program says that a sale doesn't begin until the first 'no,' and that we have to expect rejection. But when one of my customers says no, it seems like it's carved in stone. How do you get around 'no?'"

Doctor No

You know the infamous Y2K problem? The one that's going to make computers chew up legions of data at midnight on Jan. 1, 2000 when they see the digits "00" in the date and assume that the year is 1900? Well, it turns out that Y2K isn't the only millenium problem haunting business. Tombstone makers are grappling with the fact that thousands of tombstones were sold to people in the 1950's and '60's with the number "19" pre-etched for the dates of birth and death. Now the industry is dying for a solution. (Sorry!)

Fortunately, they're finding that brass plates and granite-colored cement can help them remediate a problem that seemed truly carved in stone. And the same is true for a potential customer's objections. It often is possible to bury that "no" and turn a successful sale. For tips on how to do that, I turned to Zig Zigler's classic, "Secrets of Closing the Sale" (Revell, 1984). This best seller contains 120 specific closes (and many apply whether you're selling a customer, your boss or your spouse). I've adapted the following from it.

1. Are you encouraging your customers to object? It sounds crazy, but many salespeople unwittingly do. When a customer objects, they get defensive and switch into technical knockout mode, trying to overwhelm the customer's objections with an encyclopedic rendition of their product's merits. The customer stiffens and the sale is lost. Instead, go into Dumbo mode (be all ears): "I don't get it. Tell me more about your objection. Tell me more about your needs." The more they talk, the more room you have to position your product to meet their needs.

2. Do you feel that you have to answer every objection? We rarely believe 100 percent in the products we buy. I bought a car whose color I hated because I liked the way it handled on the road (well, and the sunroof also caught my eye...). Focus on your customer's major concerns and the minor ones often disappear.

3. Do you start logically and end emotionally? Ultimately, most people make purchases for emotional reasons, not logical ones. So when a customer objects, don't just deliver a point-by-point objective rebuttal; discuss the benefits the product offers. Remind them how good they'll feel when their problem is solved. I was waffling on the car until the salesman said, "Of course, you'll need a hat with this baby 'cause otherwise your face will get sunburned..." At that moment he had me. He knew the sunroof was the one benefit that emotionally I couldn't pass up.

Zig doesn't zag when it comes to confronting objections: he acknowledges them and keeps on pitching. So should you.

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: how do you handle objections when making a sales call?

—Drop Out (what objections?), 5.6 percent

—Turn On (respond to each one), 33.8 percent

—Tune In (acknowledge some), 60.5 percent

Our winning strategy for handling sales objections comes from Dave E. in Menlo Park, CA. "I've found three kinds: legitimate concerns, temporary problems and unresolvable difficulties. Most will be legitimate concerns. The best strategy is recognize and solve. Try, 'I hear you. Here are three letters from satisfied customers who were pleased with how we handled it.' For temporary problems try: 'Is this a good enough fit you can do it now anyway?' or 'When should I check back with you?' Even superman can't sell people where there are unresolvable difficulties. Strategic and polite retreat is 'I hope that works well for you.'"

(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com)

Doing nothing allows you to do everything

WORKING MOM
An Mercado Alcantara

AS HOMEMAKER and working mom, we try to make time for everything and everyone. We are always at the tail end of our own chain of needs. We put everyone ahead of ourselves. But crucial to the balancing act is time for ourselves, time to serve not our job, not our family, but the spirit within us.

In the January/February issue of Metro Working Mom (MWM) we wrote, "Doing daily chores, working and being a wife and a mom all at once is a practiced science—there are methods and procedures to follow. But setting time to do nothing is an art. An art we need to master, too.

"I don't need to tell you about the benefits of rest and relaxation. We all know it by heart, but our brains have to be convinced of it. Our minds have to be sweet-talked into letting go of its grip on the practical and the urgent. We have to train our reason to believe that even reason needs to rest. Without taming our mind, we will feel guilty every time we take pause to relax and recharge. This is an art, and like all great arts, we need practice and discipline. We need to teach ourselves to cultivate serenity in our lives."

Metro Working Mom gives you some tips on how to master the art of doing nothing:

- Get some sleep. Beverly Paine, author of the article "Avoiding Burn Out," says, "Attending to the body's developmental and functional needs is critical to a smooth family life."
- Schedule in free time. Don't postpone your free time for the weekend. This puts pressure on it and gives it the urgency of an obligation. Instead, turn to spur-of-the-moment downtime. Take off from work an hour earlier and "disappear" for a while.
- Go for a change of surroundings. Paine suggests avoiding clutter, both visual and aural. Choose music that will slow down your pace. Talk to people who can give you a sense of perspective, people who aren't needy, who won't drain you. Escape to the great outdoors. Watch a movie or read an inspirational book. Or just do nothing!
- Seize the moment. Part of mastering serenity is taking advantage not only of the time you've set aside for yourself but also the time fate throws your way. In our rush to meet people and deadlines, we usually find ourselves, stopped dead in our tracks by waiting time—a traffic jam, a client late for an appointment, a lull between meetings. Instead of fretting and losing your patience, calm down and be grateful for the free moment.
- Look for the grace at every state. When I feel overwhelmed when there is no downtime, no moment when nothing is happening I hold myself back, and ask: where is God in the picture? I look for the moment of grace in the rush of things. The question alone puts me in a moment of stillness. I look around slowly, carefully. And when I find that one instant of grace amid the rush, that one flash of goodness amid the ruthless pace, I take pause and relish the presence of God in the small things. That alone is enough to recharge me.

Going full throttle all the time is not good. Your body, your mind, and your spirit need to rest. Making time for yourself will help you become what you most want to be: a more loving person, a more efficient worker and an over-all better mom.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is editor-in-chief of the magazine Metro Working Mom published monthly by ABS-CBN Publishing. Email your working mom experiences and tips to workingmom@pinoycentral.com. *Get more tips in the April issue of MWM with Sharon Cuneta on the cover.)*

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE*at*WORK

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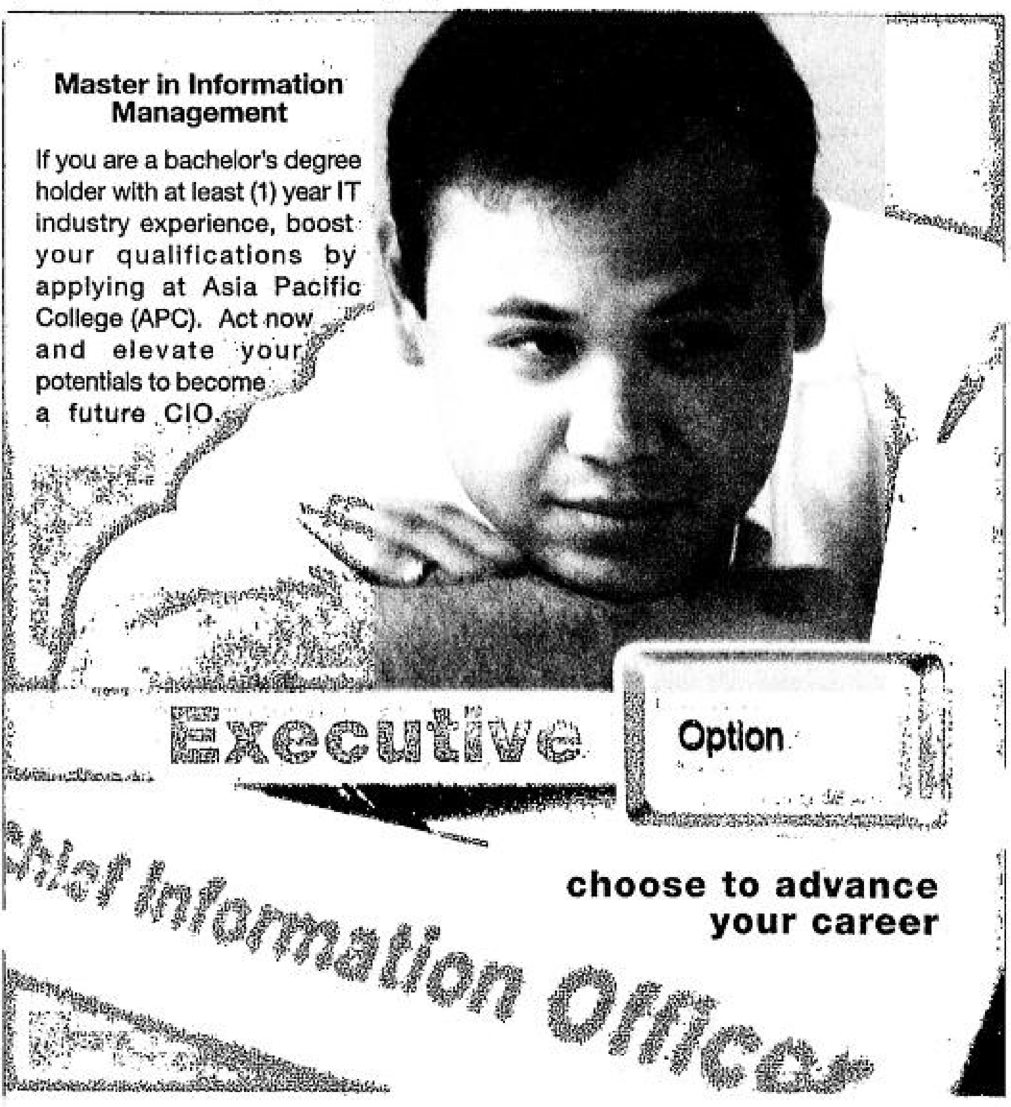

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WHAT'S INSIDE B11

- Low college grades haunt job seeker
- Work plus fun equals productivity
- How do you handle objections when trying to make a sale
- Doing nothing allows you to do everything

Watch the People at Work segment on Studio 23's "Breakfast" (aired from 6:30 to 8 a.m.) on April 29, Monday

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso** ◎ *Chief of Correspondents* **Pam Pastor**

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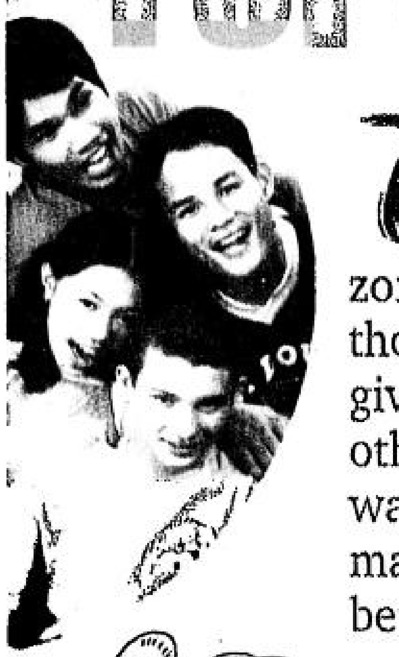
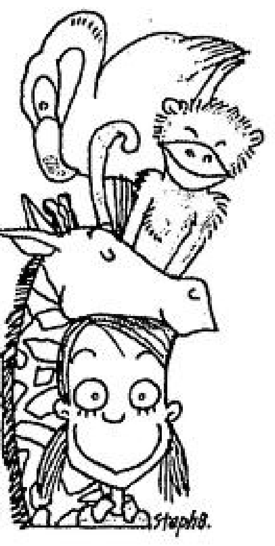


This summer, instead of sunning yourself silly or morphing into a zombie from watching all those TV reruns, why not give a little of yourself to others? There are countless ways you can try to make the world a better place, and you can never be too young or too old to start now. 2bU! shows you how in this issue that's dedicated to volunteerism for causes noble and noteworthy



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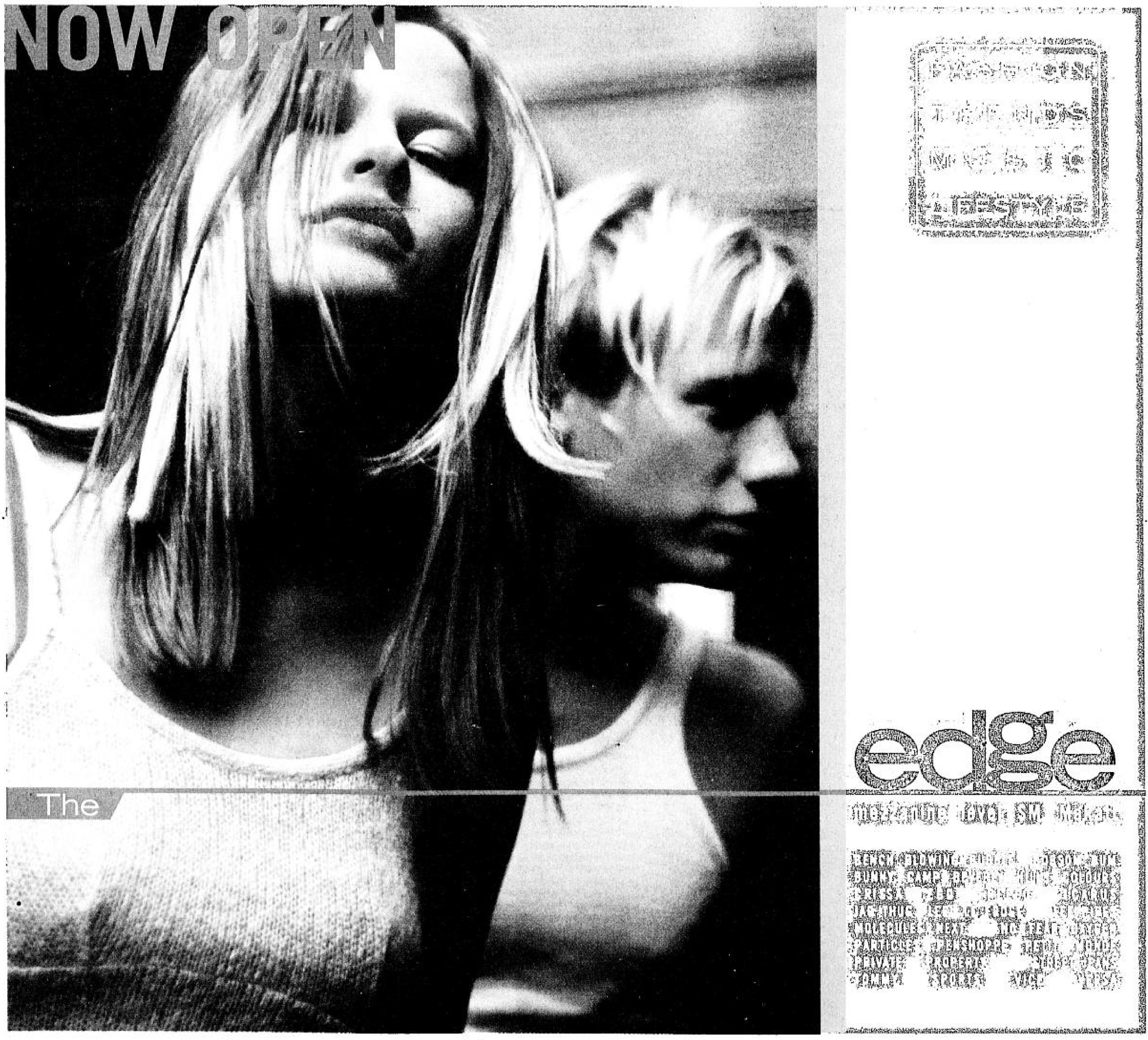

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Diary of a *Make-A-Wish* Foundation volunteer

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

IF these kids had more time, we wouldn't be asking for yours." This message from PDI's corporate relations officer and Make-A-Wish-Foundation's director for marketing Celine Madamba flashed on my mobile phone and hit me real hard.

If, despite my work and school schedule, I have time for reading, shopping and getting regular manicures and pedicures, then I definitely have time for trying to make other people happy.

I am going to Make-A-Wish Foundation's general assembly for volunteers. Saturday will be a day for feeding the soul.

March 16

As I walked up the pathway of Hutu's Hut, I didn't know what to expect. All I knew was that I wanted to help.

I saw a few familiar faces in the group of wannabe volunteers. It was heartening to see people from various fields come together—there were lawyers, doctors, corporate movers and quite a number of us from the media. To break the ice, everyone was asked to complete the sentence, "My favorite thing..." When it was my turn, I said, "My favorite thing to do is write."

MAWF's officers told us about the foundation. How it began in 1980 when Arizona Department of Public Safety officers decided to make 7-year-old leukemia patient Chris Greicius' wish to become an Arizona Trooper come true. And how Make-A-Wish Foundation affiliates worldwide have turned the wishes of thousands of terminally ill children into reality since then.

It was in 1999 that Eddieboy Santos started Make-A-Wish Foundation in the Philippines. The first wish granted was Christian Gerard Lazar's desire to "sing to the world." The 11-year-old child, who was born with a blood disorder, sang a song called "Written in the Sand" along with Regine Velasquez and 2,000 children from various schools. Their song was shown via satellite from the Manila Peninsula Hotel during the first few minutes of the new millennium.

We watched a video presentation made by MAWF membership director Barbie Puzon. After the viewing, some people were in tears. We were then asked to share our expectations with the group. Moved by everything I heard, I merely said, "I just want to try and make a difference in other people's lives."

A lot of us were worried about dealing with grief. It is a given that many wish kids will pass away. Volunteers are left to face the sadness of losing a child who has grown close to them. The talk from Lory Cipriano shed light on our concerns.

President Phillip Pastoral and the other officers told us about the process of choosing wish kids, how wishes are identified and how wish-granting teams meet and plan to make the wish grant as meaningful for the child as possible. The more I learned about the foundation, the more I wanted to be a part of it.

Hearing about the process was not enough. The officers wanted us to feel the magic of granting wishes. We were grouped and each team was given the file of one wish kid. That was the moment Carmela Cabigting entered our lives and, more importantly, our hearts. Kenken was 2 years and 4 months old when she was diagnosed with Wilm's Tumor. Koyen Cipriano, MAWF's director for search, was able to discover 5-year-old Kenken's biggest dream—to meet Jolina Magdangal. It was our job to think of ways to turn her desire into reality.

I was lucky to be part of such a dynamic and active group. Forget that most of us just met that day. We all plunged into the wish-granting experience with gusto. Gino Abano, Gina Mok, Nizzi Regalado, Mari Swa, Charisse Yap, Ton Gatmaitan and I excitedly exchanged ideas for the grant. Although plans have yet to be finalized, one thing's for sure. Kenken will be meeting Jolina.

March 17

Our biggest enemy is time. We set a deadline. In one month we would do whatever it would take to meet that deadline.

Kenken also has other wishes—she wants to go to an amusement park. We needed to get in touch with Enchanted Kingdom. After digging through my messy room to find the business card I was looking for, I sent an e-mail to Enchanted Kingdom's VP, but the e-mail immediately bounced back. Since it was Sunday, I had no choice but to wait until Monday before I could call Enchanted Kingdom's office.

March 18

What's one day, right? But when you're right in the middle of a wish grant, even one night is excruciatingly long.

I finally got in touch with the Enchanted Kingdom people. I was given another e-mail address. I sent an e-mail to Dennis Cruz, their VP for marketing and business development.

March 20

Nizzi, Gina and Ton got together for updates. I felt bad about missing the meeting, but I had to go to Hong Kong overnight for a press conference. Ton worked fast. He was able to speak to Jun Magdangal, Jolina's dad, and found out that they were very willing to let Kenken meet Jolina. Yeay! We are on our way.

And since Kenken also loved Jollibee, Ton spoke with the Visayas Avenue branch (near Jolina's store) and got positive results. They were willing to host lunch for 20 people!

March 21

I called Enchanted Kingdom to check the status of my letter. Dennis Cruz expressed their willingness to help us. This is going to make me sound like a major crybaby, but I wanted to bawl my head off right there. Realizing that other people are so willing to give just touched me deeply.

March 26

Ton visited Jolina's Fashion Gallery on Visayas Avenue to look at the place and to confirm the date of the wish grant with Jolina's dad. Our tentative dates are April 4 or 11.

March 27

Our team has been e-mailing back and forth over the past days, confirming plans, trying to find out what else is needed. Things have been going smoothly.

I contacted Jet Valle of Backroom and asked him if Disney Channel would be willing to give us some toys for Kenken. I hardly had to wait for the answer, which was a resounding yes. Once again, I felt like crying.

Everything is just falling into place. Everything's working like magic.

April 5

After getting my clearance (I passed!) from school, I went straight to Hutu's Hut, not caring that I looked like an idiot in my uniform.

It was the day of our final meeting before the wish grant. The officers were also there to guide us. After finding out that I'm a year younger than her, Koyen joked that she was passing on her throne to me as the youngest MAWF member.

Everything seems ready. We are all set. Next Thursday will be our special day.

April 11

Without a single minute of shut-eye (I had stayed in the office until 9 a.m.), I stood in front of Jolina's Fashion Gallery. It was strange that despite the lack of sleep I felt completely energized. Ton was already inside and Jolina's dad had just arrived. Soon, the other people from our group and the MAWF officers were all crowded around the store, looking at trinkets and talking about what was about to unfold.

Minutes later, Jolina arrived, looking vibrant and excited about meeting our wish kid.

It should have been a surprise for Kenken, but her grandma, perhaps overcome with excitement, ended up telling her granddaughter that her dream was about to come true. Booie, who had volunteered to pick up Kenken and her family from their home in Manila, was in touch with the group and kept updating us about their location.

The moment Kenken entered the store, nestled in her mom's arms, everything changed. I had a strong urge to just fade into the background. At that moment, it stopped being about us. All those weeks and today, especially, was about her. Completely about her.

Kenken was a bit shy in the beginning, perhaps overwhelmed by the number of people waiting and the cameras that surrounded her (there were a few press people plus Ton's crew who would be responsible for putting together a music video for Kenken). But Jolina was brilliant. She stepped out of her hiding place and started talking to Kenken like she was talking to an old friend. Kenken appeared somewhat dazed by Jolina's presence, but Jolina knew how to make the child feel at ease. They sat together as the rest of us watched and Jolina started to fix Kenken's hair, even adding ribbons to match the little girl's outfit. The two continued to talk and Jolina gave her two autographed Jolina dolls (also on Kenken's wish list). After watching them for a bit, we all filed out to give Kenken a moment of privacy with Jolina.

Celine (who found the day extra special because it was also her birthday), Nizzi and I went to Jollibee ahead of the others to check if everything was in place. The people from Jollibee even put up a banner with Kenken's name on it and made sure that Jollibee, the mascot, was there to entertain her.

Everyone moved from Jolina's store to Jollibee and spent the rest of the afternoon in celebration.

It felt good to be there, knowing that in our small way we made a child happy.

April 19

Today, I am one wish grant and one orientation away from being a full-fledged MAWF member. And just as I told Ton and Koyen after that memorable Thursday, I am already looking forward to our next wish grant.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

An unforgettable kid touches many lives

By Koyen Cipriano

I MET Mark Reyes at the Philippine Children's Medical Hospital. During our first meeting, he was shy and looked irritated because of his medication for leukemia. He was frail and was sitting in a wheel chair.

The next time I met him, he was confined in one of the wards. This time, I noticed he was talkative and his way of thinking was like of an old man. He reminded me of Morrie (from the book "Tuesday's with Morrie"). His personality was very different from the other kids who shared the ward with him. I don't mean to compare, but Mark stood out. His wish was simple—he wanted a car with remote control. He loves watching F1 races and racecars. His second wish was to meet President Gloria Arroyo. He said he wanted to talk to her about poverty and sick children like him who couldn't afford treatment.

Mark was very religious and God-fearing. His outlook was always positive —he even told his doctors where to prick the needle when they couldn't find a vein. He'd tell his doctors what medication he needed, and he would always turn out to be correct.

When he was not yet sick, Mark served as a sacristan for their church. He was always on top of his class. I asked him if he liked to read because he knew so much information, but he said he'd rather watch TV. He would joke with a poker face, and when you'd laugh he'd say the joke wasn't even that funny. I have a lot of memories with Mark.

When I learned that Mark passed away, I didn't utter a word. But somehow, I felt at peace. I knew he went straight to Heaven.

During our last conversation, Mark told me about his dream. He was talking to Jesus and told Him that if he got well, he would become a priest. I got goose bumps when he told me about it.

I went to Mark's wake and his dad told me Mark had a message for me. He wanted the toy that I gave him to be displayed during the wake so I'd know that he appreciated it.

Everyone in his wake talked about him and how he touched their lives.

Mark wasn't just a wish kid. He was a great friend.

You, too, can be a part of Make-A-Wish Foundation Phils. as a volunteer or a corporate partner. Visit the MAWF office at Unit 108 Narra Building, 2276 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City, call 817-7387, fax 817-7395, e-mail wish@best wish.org or log on to www.bestwish.org.

Young leader destined to build tomorrow

By Giles Ivan A. Aquino
2bU! Contributor

A PERCENTAGE of .01 away from being a summa cum laude, 20-year-old UPLB nutrition graduate Monte Cristo Leonardo O. Anderle has touched the lives of people in ways one couldn't imagine.

During his freshman year, he was part of UPLB's VIP CWS (Values Intergradations Promotion Civic Welfare Service) that involves environmental and civic works, with National Defense School graduate Dr. Vivian Gonzalez as head.

In 1999-2000, he was assigned as the student head. He mobilized the cadets and reached out to 14 barangays all over Los Baños. Seminars and campaigns on drugs, rabies and current issues that affect the community were the main concerns.

Through the help of Red Cross, they did medical missions called Dugong Alay—Dugtong Buhay, which is done every semester. Bloods donated by cadets are directly given to the Philippine Red Cross at UP PGH. Book drives were also an integral part of their service. He has devoted two years to VIP CWS. Also a member of the Ayala Young Leaders Congress batch 2001, Leo was then introduced to World Leaders Build.

Receiving a flat 1 for his nutrition practicum, he was able to solicit P83,000, P1,300 of which is cash and the remaining were medicines, a nebulizer and trash cans. Leo thought it would be hard to do community work, "*Akala ko 'pag* outsider *ka hindi ka pakikinggan eh*. They were very happy and cooperative *kaya* now I'm very happy *kasi* what's happening in the barangay has been sustained. Continuous *'yung ginagawa, hindi lang kesyo nandu'n kami du'n lang nila ginagawa*. Right now, they're continuing all the projects and everything that we did. We're able to lessen the level of malnutrition in the community in just seven weeks."

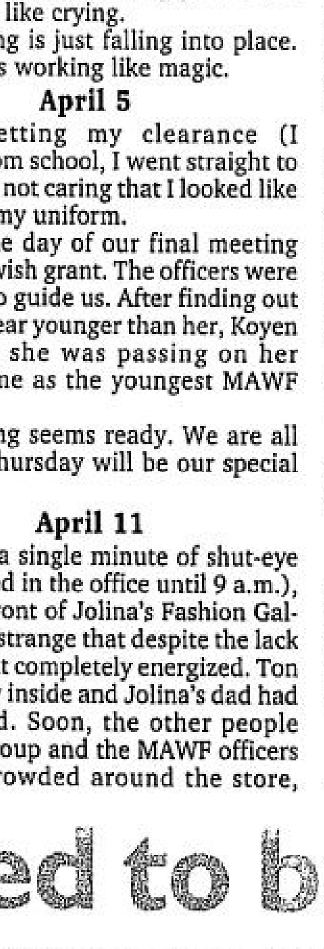
Hard work

Getting along with people outside UPLB for community work has not been easy for Leo. It took almost a week for him to capture the hearts of people who now invite him over to their homes for a vacation. "It's hard *kasi alam nilang* outsider *ka eh*. But you must get along with the people. Be friendly, always smile. Try to put yourself in their situation. *Makibagay ka sa kanila*."

He believes that if you enjoy what you're doing, such work will not be hard. "It comes back *kung nag-i-*enjoy *ka sa ginagawa mo eh. Ako kasi* I really enjoy what I'm doing. *Kung napipilitan ka, ah mahihirapan ka du'n*. I tell you, it won't be successful. It's like going to med school. *'Pag ikaw hindi ka desidido at wala kang* passion *mag-aral ng medisina, walang mangyayari sa 'yo. Oo nga, ga-*graduate *ka nga ng* medicine, *hindi mo naman na-i-*enjoy *'yung trabaho mo*. Useless."

Leo was chosen to be part of Bayer Young Environmental Envoys. A program of the Commission on Higher Education and Luntiang Pilipinas, Sen. Loren Legarda heads the program. Top 16 students from NCR, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao were invited to an eco-camp and lecture in Subic, and seven of them, which included Leo, were sent to Germany for an eco-tour.

His biggest project was from BYEE where he conducted solid waste management in two barangays in Nagcarlan, Laguna where he taught small cottage businesses, incorporating his desire for environment and community service. He was able to teach them how to recycle metallic foils from chips and candies.



LEONARDO Anderle

"*Siyempre 'pag tinapon mo sa* ground, *hindi naman 'yan mag-*disintegrate." He told them to cut these into small pieces and make them as fillers for pillows. At present, mothers in two communities have made it their business. People in the area even collect metallic foils that are sold for P1,000/kilo. It may have been a small deed, but it has created a big impact. Leo firmly believes that one should learn how to "fish" in order to survive.

Seeing these people's involvement even after his work was finished is what he finds rewarding. "Important *sa akin 'yung* sustainability. *Kasi* when you teach something to these people, *kailangan* they should absorb it. *Mas importante* that these people will learn and do it. When you want something sustainable, *lalo na sa mga* community *na* people are less educated, you teach them the basics. When you make your basic ideas as the foundation it grows *eh, matatag 'yung 'pag* build thus creating a very good community."

Forest park in Montalban

After graduation he'll be involved in an organization in Montalban. "*Grabe kasing* degradation *'yung ginagawa nila sa* Montalban. So I'll be helping out this NGO." His sentiments regarding quarrying will be aired on April 28 on Channel 9, 2-3 p.m., on "Daigdig ng Sugatan." This is one of Leo's priorities aside from the garbage problem, which is supported by Fr. Benigno Beltran.

"The mayor of Montalban also approved my proposal of having my own forest park in Montalban. Each of the 16 envoys would do a forest park in our areas. So this is now what I'll be focusing on. He will conduct tree planting in Montalban to save the forest watershed there. *Wala na 'yung mga* trees *namin, terible*." One of his sentiments is, "*Ayokong mabasa sa pahayagan o mapanood sa telebisyon ang kung ano man 'yung trahedya na nangyari sa* Antipolo *eh mangyayari sa* Montalban. *Hinding-hindi ako papayag na mangyari 'yun*."

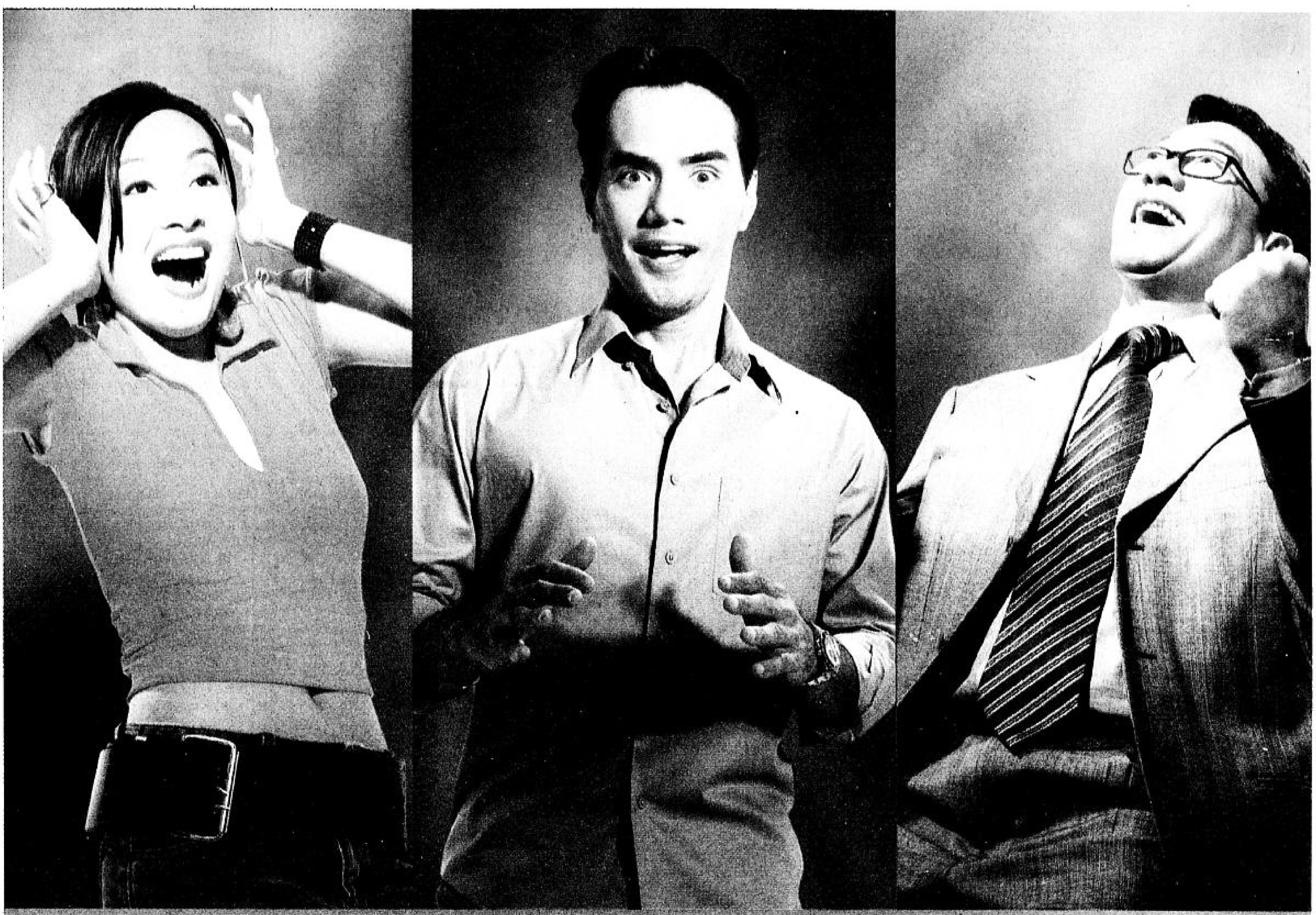
He said it's about time he does something for his people in Montalban. When he gets home, he'll distribute five boxes of milk and medicines, which he saved especially for them. One of the beneficiaries is a home for the disabled and a seminary called Cotollengo. He also plans to hold a medical mission.

He intends to work for a food service institution, but he has no plans of leaving NGO work. "An NGO must be both community service- and environment-oriented," Leo says.

Leo is currently helping Globe's outreach program in Ifugao. "I'll have a good summer vacation, perhaps for two weeks then review for the board exams in July."

This guy deserves much more. In one of the letters addressed to him, it read, "He might not have graduated summa cum laude, but he has received the highest honors from the people he helped." One can only agree.

E-mail the author at gielsaquino@edsamail.com.ph



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When phoning a friend is not just a game

By Jason Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

With the anonymity that callers for DAF enjoy, they find it easier to open up about their painful problems

SOMETIMES, our friends boggle the mind. They call at 2 a.m. to discuss the merits of buying a pair of new sneakers. Or they hallucinate about being subjects of admiration by the hottest guy in campus. That or other ego-related problems. Then there are some whom we just can't seem to help because their problems involve so much pain (take teenage pregnancy) and we find ourselves as clueless as they are about what to do.

Then we remember that there used to be a time when there was actually such a thing as Dial A Friend (DAF). Wasn't a 16-year-old Lea Salonga its spokesperson then?

Crisis prevention

True enough, DAF exists to this day. It's listed in the phonebook under "counseling groups," particularly under the Foundation for Adolescent Development Inc. (FAD) And aside from phone counseling, FAD launched another project called E-mail A Friend (EAF) two years ago.

For starters, DAF is one of the many programs designed by FAD to help young people address their health and sexuality needs. These projects aim "to provide support to prevent crisis." Aside from DAF and EAF, there are the Teen Healthquarters (a community-based lifestyle center for young adults), the campus-based Sexters program (Socially, Emotionally, Sexually Responsible Teens), Life Planning Education and Vocational Skills Training Program and the Entertainment for Education Programs (Enter-Educate).

DAF started out as a project of the Philippine Center for Population Development, before FAD adopted it in 1991. At present, the foundation has two staff counselors and eight regular volunteers.

According to Ednil Quitoriano, 23, and Jun Suarez, 21, two of its most experienced counselors, the age of their callers range from 17 to 24 years old although they've had callers (or "clients" in their lingo) as young as 12 and as old as 60.

"I guess it's because age isn't really a measurement of one's maturity," Jun explains. "It's how you make decisions in life." Despite the age difference, their clients still trust that they'd be able to help callers in making decisions. Anyway, they do have a lot of counseling experience under their belt.

In college, Jun was a volunteer for an NGO devoted to orphaned children and those who are victims of incest. He did face-to-face counseling there before deciding to work for FAD. "I realized how many people seek the help of FAD," he adds.

On the other hand, Ednil used to be a member of the peer counseling organization at St. Joseph's College, her alma mater. "I was in my senior year when I applied for FAD," she shares. Together with three of her friends, she accepted the call of their guidance counselor for young volunteers. Initially, she wanted the job for her resumé. "I was a psychology major and I thought that it would be nice to have something to write in my resumé. But I honestly told them that was one of my motivations." That motive changed after just one year with the foundation.

The counselors admit that most of their callers ask about boy-girl relationship problems, which range from secret crushes to commitment problems. "Sometimes a girl would ask if she should tell a guy she likes him," says Ednil. "It may sound like a really light and unimportant problem to us but it's not like that to her. You cannot make light of people's problems even if it's about 'crushes'. It's a big deal to the person."

Aside from relationship issues, other common subjects of calls to the DAF are peer-related, family and self-esteem problems. According to Jun, these are concerns of the normal adolescent, although they do receive calls that can be challenging to handle, such as clients who are contemplating suicide or who engage in deviant sexual behaviors like adultery or incest.

Training

To equip them with the necessary knowledge to handle calls of such nature, FAD's counselors undergo rigid training and regular discussions/conferences. "We have something called Counselor's Care where we talk about our own problems that may be triggered by the nature of the calls that we receive, especially if they're related. This means that we take care of our own selves," says Ednil. "And then the foundation invites resource persons to talk about issues that we may not be familiar with. Also, counselors help one another tackle some cases that we find difficult to handle."

Both of them carefully stress that they're not there to give advice but to counsel. Jun explains that the approach of DAF is "non-directive." "First, we determine and clarify the problem," he explains. "Then we give them options and their possible consequences. Lastly, we ask them for their action plan. What have they decided to do?" He adds that they can't be expected to give their clients answers to their questions, but with their objectivity, they are able to see the overview of things. This, Ednil explains, is their advantage over a caller's friends, who may find it hard to stay objective. "Plus, there's a possibility that he may be judged by his friends," she adds. With the anonymity that callers for DAF enjoy, they find it easier to open up.

But sometimes, it is the counselor's anonymity that gets sacrificed, no thanks to stalkers. Jun shares that there are people who come up to him outside work. And because of that, they get paranoid whenever they're on the road. Meanwhile, there are other callers who eventually want to meet their counselors in person. "They become very dependent, they desire for you," says Ednil. "Some of them fall in love and start to think you're the right person for them."

That, of course, is highly discouraged. Counselors aren't there for you to socialize and chit-chat with; that is not part of their job. Because of this, FAD doesn't advocate follow-up calls.

"They have to understand that they eventually have to face their own problems. What if we're not around? What are they going to do?" Jun stresses.

Passion for what they do

Despite that downside (and the burn-out feeling that they occasionally get from handling more than 10 calls a day), counselors have not lost the passion for what they do. Ednil says it stems from her personal need to help somebody. "It's because I've been there. I know what it feels like not having somebody to talk to. What I feel now is the need to be of service to somebody else."

For Jun, it's realizing that you make a positive change in other people's lives. "We all love it when someone calls us back to thank us for what we've done. That life has been a little bit better for them because of our conversation." Aside from that, they also cite the lessons that they learn from their callers. Ednil says that the learning experience works both ways—"they learn from you and you learn from them."

Your friends may still bother you about their shoe problems. Be glad—for them and for you—that's all they're worried about. But for more important and really touchy matters, you now know what numbers you can give them to dial.

Visit Foundation for Adolescent Development Inc. at www.teenfad.ph. E-mail A Friend is available at the website. Call Dial A Friend at 734-9664 (AIDS Teen Hotline), 734-9663 (Male Hotline), 734-8902/8903 (Teen Hotlines). Lines are open 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays.

E-mail the author at jason_2bu@yahoo.com

Leaders of tomorrow are young volunteers today

By Saleema Devi Refran
2bU! Correspondent

YOUNG Volunteers of Today (YVT) is an organization formed just last March by some Far Eastern University (FEU) students. Chaired by Celmer Santos, it aims to tap the students' leadership potentials by volunteering to help different causes. The YVT intends to impart the essence of volunteerism to other young people and teach them to become good members of the society.

With more than 60 members and an official launching slated for this coming school year, the YVT hopes to attract more young people to help make a difference in our world.

Recently, 2bU! caught up with the group's assistant treasurer Andrea Abundo and seven other members who joined Hands On Manila's clean-up activity at Arroceros Forest Park.

FEU students clean up Arroceros Forest Park. PHOTO BY JESS YUSON

While most teenagers are getting their fill of fun and frolic out in the sun and spending their parents' hard-earned money, the YVT members choose to help society by cleaning up parks, reading books to children, building homes and a whole lot more. How do they react to such negative remarks as "Yuck, that's so corny"?

"We don't care," Anna Santos said, "as long as *nakakatulong kami.* Roland Gilbert Mantanza added: "*Mabuti naman ang mga ginagawa namin. Hindi naman 'to kalokohan.*"

"They don't know what they're missing," Andrea said. "It's fulfilling *kapag alam mong nakatulong ka* in your little way."

Service to others

They joined Hands On Manila only last month and already they have done much—from building homes in Muntinlupa with Habitat for Humanity to reading books and even wrapping them at Museo Pambata.

But why not just stick to one cause? "We don't want to limit ourselves," Andrea said. "*Maraming kailangan gawin.* We want to maximize our time to help others more."

Added Anna: "*Siguro kasi* the need inside us to help is too big *na hindi namin alam kung saan talaga kami tutulong.*"

"*Saka 'pag nasimulan mo na kasing tumulong, hindi mo na mapigil ang sarili mo,*" DeeJay Barrera said.

"*Gusto ko talagang mag*-serve," Sherwin Mychael Tejano said. "Whatever I can do, just to help."

After all that hard work, however, the world is still the same. After the clean up, people are back to making a mess at the park. After building one house, even more people are becoming homeless. Helping seems pointless.

"Actually, we're not expecting anything from anyone," Andrea said. "*Basta kami ginagawa lang namin yung tama.* We're setting an example for other teenagers. *Siguro 'pag nakita nila yung mga* hardships *namin,* somehow we'll be able to influence others."

Even if doing good often takes its physical toll on some members, it can be rewarding.

"We learn so much from what we do," Anna said. "We meet different people *tapos nakakakwentuhan namin sila. Natututuhan namin na hindi biro pala ang mabuhay.*"

"We appreciate more what we have now," Andrea said. "*Mas nagpapasalamat pa kami ngayon sa mga* blessings *na natatanggap namin.*"

"We're becoming more responsible people," Roland said.

Chain reaction

Of the many problems in the world, how does one know where to start? Poverty, pollution, AIDS; cancer—name it, our country's got it. What does our country need?

"Cooperation," Andrea said. Without it, she added, we'd accomplish nothing.

"We can only do so much," Sherwin said. "We need help from everyone. It's not just us, *dapat* everyone."

Roland said others should follow what they had started. "Chain reaction *lang naman ang kailangan,*" DJ said. "If everybody would join in, we'd be able to solve all problems."

The students joined the YVT for different reasons. "I joined *kasi nakita ko na tumutulong sila,*" Kristine Mae Radomes said. "They're not doing this to please anyone or just for a school project. *Talagang gusto nila ang ginagawa nila.*"

Mark Anthony Malubay was lured because he saw how much the member enjoyed themselves. "*Nakakatulong ka na nga, masaya ka pa* with your friends."

As for Jarry Liganor, "The thought that you're actually helping others is one experience you just can't miss."

Students as they are, a small group they may be, they are out to make a difference in this chaotic world of ours.

If you are a student of FEU and want to help, join Young Volunteers of Today. To others who want to promote change in the society, join Hands On Manila.

Carrying on a family tradition of serving others

By Mariless Villamar
2bU! Correspondent

VANESSA Garon grew up in an environment where words like social respon sibility, moral values, accountability and honor were constantly heard. The desire to serve others was cultivated in the eldest daughter of Bob and Emmy Garon, the couple who made television debates popular and who also ran a drug rehabilitation center in Batangas, at such a young age. Wanting to help make things better for the less fortunate, she joined Squadron 116 of the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary (PCGA), a reserve unit of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

CAPT. Emmy Garon

LT. J.G. Vanessa Garon

One mission

The PCG has the duty to enforce laws on the high seas and territorial waters of the Philippines. The auxiliary unit was formed to help and support the PCG in rescue operations as well as other projects designed to protect the country's marine resources. The PCGA also aims to promote youth development and environmental awareness.

Vanessa joined the PCGA a year ago, after finishing college. "I would always tag along with my mom who was already a member... when they invited me to join, I [became] the youngest member in our squadron at 20 years old," she recalls. Belonging to Squadron 116, she started with the rank of ensign, equivalent to an entry-level position in a company.

Membership in the PCGA does not come cheap though as the Coast Guard cannot support the auxiliary financially. The PCGA has to fund its projects with money from members. The uniform alone, which they wear during official functions, is expensive, about P3,500 a set, and each member needs a set of at least three. But members do not mind the expense as they pursue their goal—to help. "These (members) are people with money and power but they're willing to get their hands dirty to make things happen. They're presidents of companies but they respected me even as an ensign."

Part of a family

The members meet once a month at the Century Park Hotel where they have guest speakers, or simply collect feedback. They also have recreational activities like ballroom dancing and entertainment programs. Once or twice a year, members undergo training or rescue drills with the PCG. The training sharpens their skills and know-how for actual rescue operations. They also conduct medical missions in coastal communities quite regularly. Vanessa enjoys the experience immensely.

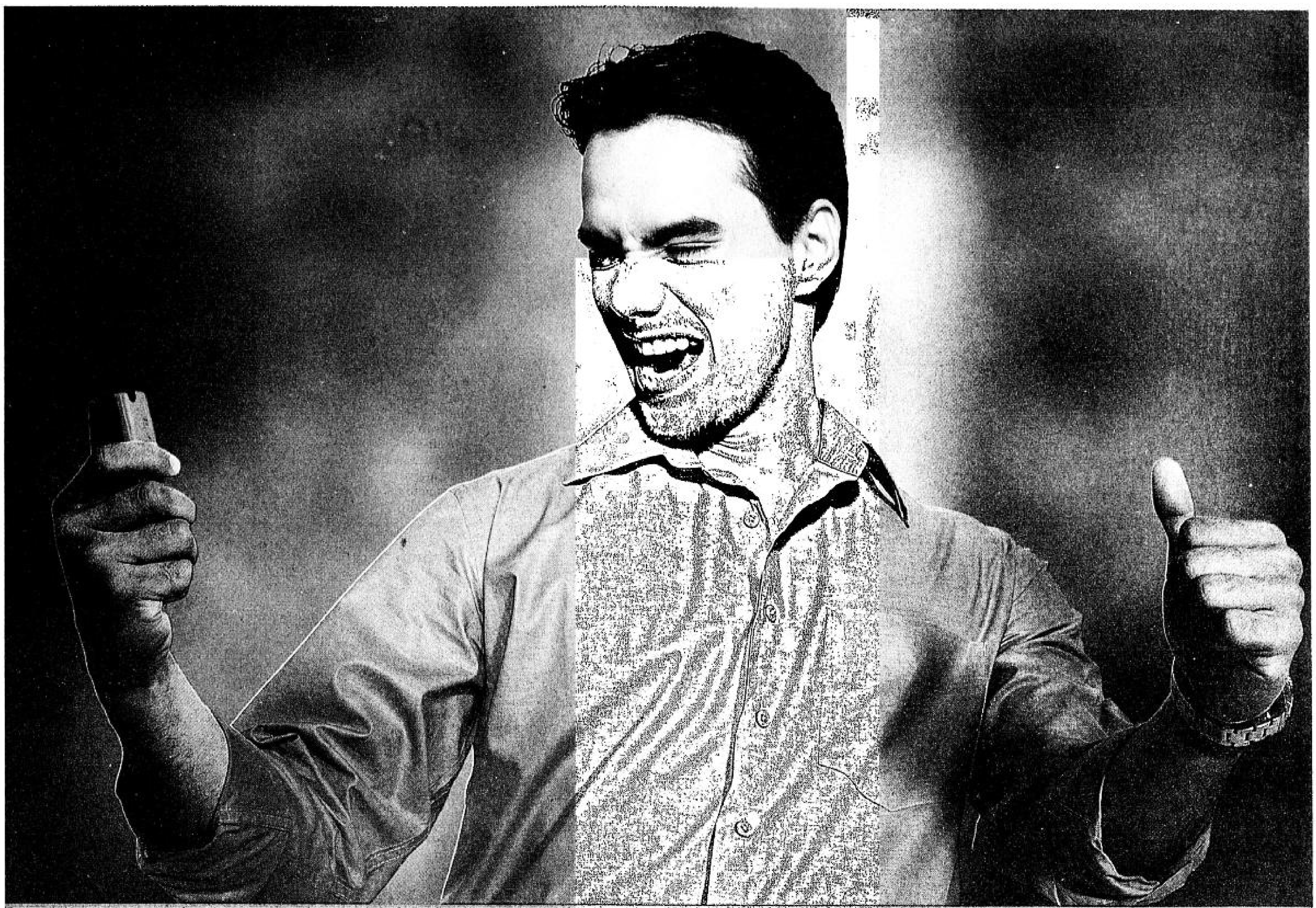
"I've been to numerous medical missions, we give free circumcision, dental and optical check-ups. But I basically just comfort the kids," she says. Doctors who join the missions are mostly members. A professor at the De La Salle University Medical School would sometimes bring his students with him. Others who help include specialists from Medical Center Parañaque and the University of the East dental organization.

The PCGA also has clean-up campaigns along the shores. In April last year, more than 50 squadron members participated in cleaning up the Pasig and San Juan rivers. A project, which Vanessa is particularly proud of, is the blood-letting campaign. She did not donate blood but she donated plasma to the mission.

Proud of what she does

Vanessa is now a lieutenant junior grade. Promotion in the unit depends on how active a member is and the number of projects he/she has participated in. Participation in a project, like a medical mission, earns a member a red ribbon. The number of ribbons determines a member's rank. Before becoming a lieutenant junior grade, Vanessa held the rank of commander of sea scouts. "I was assigned to [train and assist] a group of people [in rescues], mostly new members," she says. Vanessa is proud that her squadron is the most active and has often the most number of participants during activities.

"When I go to a Coast Guard meeting, I go because I believe in the cause of PCGA. I feel proud because we are a squadron of action," she says. Being a PCGA member requires dedication and commitment, and Vanessa thinks it is all worth it. "There's really so much to do, so many people to help, it's just a matter of going there and doing your part. I can't imagine doing a job that's not meaningful."



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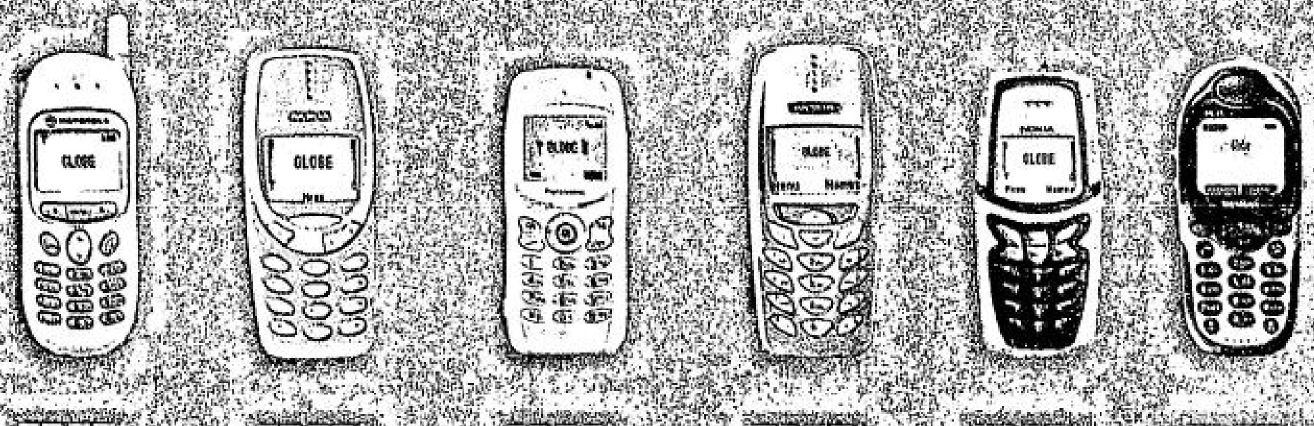

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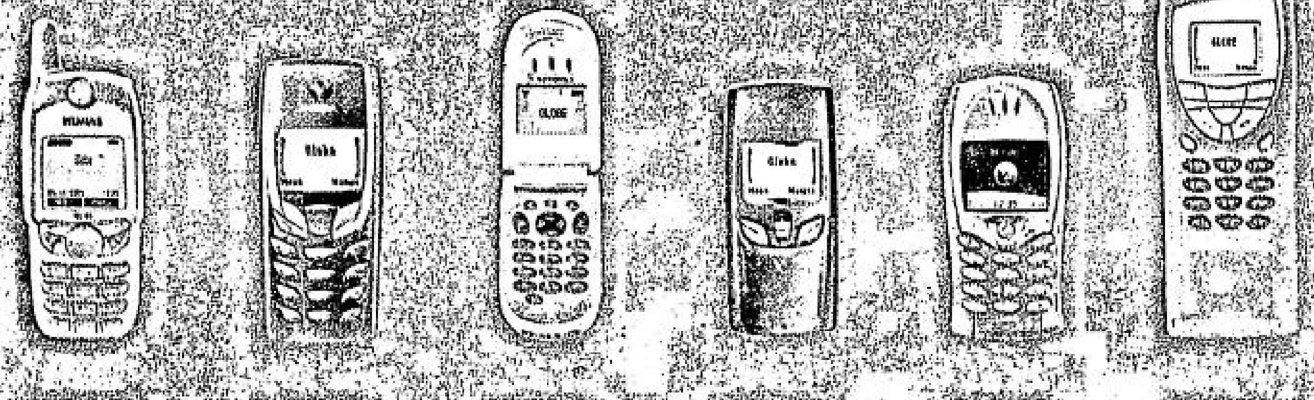

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Motorola T190	4,500	3,500	2,500	1,500	FREE	3,500	1,500	FREE	FREE	FREE	5,790	5,490	5,140	4,690	4,500	3,500	2,500	1,500	FREE	3,500	1,500	1,000	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Panasonic GD75	6,500	5,500	4,500	3,500	1,500	5,500	3,500	500	FREE	FREE	7,690	7,390	7,040	6,590	6,500	5,500	4,500	3,500	1,500	5,500	3,500	3,000	2,000	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Nokia 3350	6,500	5,500	4,500	3,500	1,500	5,500	3,500	500	FREE	FREE	8,090	7,790	7,440	6,990	6,500	5,500	4,500	3,500	1,500	5,500	3,500	3,000	2,000	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Nokia 5210	9,500	8,500	7,500	6,500	4,500	8,500	6,500	3,500	FREE	FREE	—	—	—	—	9,500	8,500	7,500	6,500	4,500	8,500	6,500	6,000	5,000	3,000	2,000	1,000	FREE	FREE	FREE
Siemens ME45	13,000	12,000	11,000	10,000	8,000	12,000	10,000	7,000	3,500	FREE	—	—	—	—	13,000	12,000	11,000	10,000	8,000	12,000	10,000	9,500	8,500	6,500	5,500	4,500	2,500	1,000	FREE
Siemens SL45	16,000	15,000	14,000	13,000	11,000	15,000	13,000	10,000	6,500	2,500	—	—	—	—	16,000	15,000	14,000	13,000	11,000	15,000	13,000	12,500	11,500	9,500	8,500	7,500	5,500	4,000	2,000
Nokia 6510	18,000	17,000	16,000	15,000	13,000	17,000	15,000	12,000	8,500	4,500	—	—	—	—	18,000	17,000	16,000	15,000	13,000	17,000	15,000	14,500	13,500	11,500	10,500	9,500	7,500	6,000	4,000
Motorola V66	18,500	17,500	16,500	15,500	13,500	17,500	15,500	12,500	9,000	5,000	—	—	—	—	18,500	17,500	16,500	15,500	13,500	17,500	15,500	15,000	14,000	12,000	11,000	10,000	8,000	6,500	4,500
Nokia 8855	23,000	22,000	21,000	20,000	18,000	22,000	20,000	17,000	13,500	9,500	—	—	—	—	23,000	22,000	21,000	20,000	18,000	22,000	20,000	19,500	18,500	16,500	15,500	14,500	12,500	11,000	9,000
Ericsson T68	23,000	22,000	21,000	20,000	18,000	22,000	20,000	17,000	13,500	9,500	—	—	—	—	23,000	22,000	21,000	20,000	18,000	22,000	20,000	19,500	18,500	16,500	15,500	14,500	12,500	11,000	9,000
Nokia 9210	35,000	34,000	33,000	32,000	30,000	34,000	32,000	29,000	25,500	21,500	—	—	—	—	35,000	34,000	33,000	32,000	30,000	34,000	32,000	31,500	30,500	28,500	27,500	26,500	24,500	23,000	21,000

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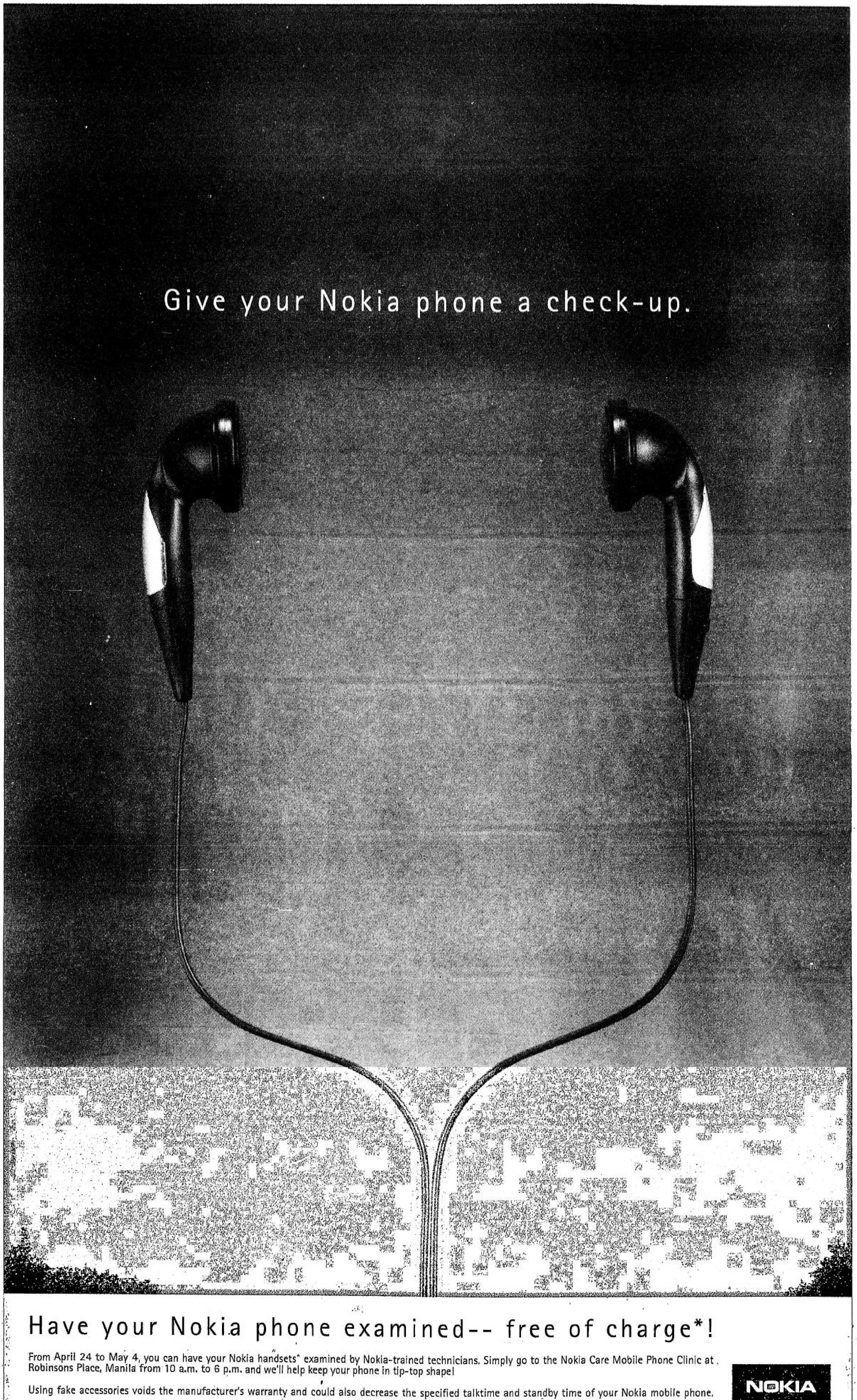

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CONNECTING PEOPLE

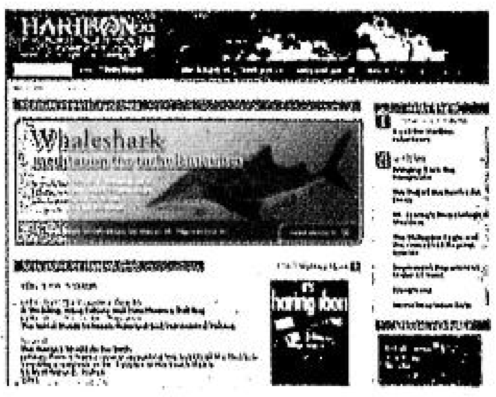
Be a cyber warrior against social problems

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

THESE days, it seems that the more problems the world has to cope with, the more apathetic people have become. Perhaps the fact that the problems are so pervasive has made some people indifferent, or maybe they just don't know how they can help solve these problems.

Technology has made it so much easier to be aware of what is going on. There's no excuse to remain indifferent as a click of the mouse allows people to access websites and keep abreast of developments. However, while the Internet provides great convenience, one runs the risk of connecting with phony organizations that will waste a person's time and money.

If you want to know what ails the society or, even better, find out how you can help ease the problems, it is best to do your homework. Thousands of cause-oriented groups exist, many of them affiliated with international organizations. They also have websites that you can easily access wherever you are. Below are a few websites you can check out.



There's no excuse to remain indifferent as a click of the mouse allows people to access websites and keep abreast of developments

World Wildlife Fund Philippines (Kabang Kalikasan ng Pilipinas)

www.wwf-phil.org.ph

This is perhaps the most creative environmental website I've come across. Instead of simply clicking on words to get you from one subject to another, you click on the different parts of a giant turtle (*pawikan*). It is also a great site for downloading stuff like screensavers and documents, especially if you like that giant panda logo. The virtual tour of the Tubbataha Reef is a visual feast.

Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources

www.haribon.org.ph

First set up as a bird-watching group, Haribon (from the words *hari* and *ibon*, or king of birds) is now a full-fledged nonstock, nonprofit nature and wildlife conservation organization. It explains the importance of conserving natural resources for future generations. The website focuses mainly on birds as the winged animals are importance indicators of biodiversity. Comprehensive yet readable, the site is a must-see because of the amazing photos of rare animals in the country.

Opportunity International

www.opportunity.org

"Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime." This old adage seems to be the motto of this international group. A nonprofit organization that helps in the global battle against poverty, Opportunity International provides loans and basic training in business practices to the poor. This viewer-friendly site introduces the Net surfer to the organization's projects and e-newsletter. It also teaches the basics of microfinance. The success rates that are flashed on the screen when you log on are impressive. The site might inspire those who really want to do something to eliminate poverty.

Ephpheta Foundation for the Blind Inc.

www.ephpheta.com

From an Aramaic word meaning "be opened," Ephpheta is one of the many foundations that focus specifically on the blind. It was founded by Rev. Fr. Jesus Fernandez. What is interesting about this website is the page listing future projects of the foundation, such as a computer center for the blind, a National Blind Reflexology Center, and a pre-blindness training center. Ephpheta.com has won an award as one of the Best Cyber Pinoy sites.

Unicef Philippines

www.unicef.org/philippines

One thing about Unicef.org is that it tends to be more scholarly. Once you enter the site, you immediately get the latest news. There are no fancy introductory messages or animation. The site is concise and direct to the point. It's a reliable research site. Those wanting to contribute to the organization can simply use the mouse to buy Unicef greeting cards.

The Global Movement for Children

www.gmfc.org

Made popular recently because of commercials, The Global Movement for Children is a collaboration of people and organizations promoting the rights of the child. The website discusses issues like discrimination, exploitation, child abuse, etc. It also promotes better health standards, nutrition, education and the fight against HIV and AIDS. The Take Action page links you to dozens of other organizations that also promote the rights of the child.

Philippine Breast Cancer Network

www.meltingpot.fortunecity.com/armenia/376

With breast cancer being one of the most dreaded diseases among women, it is reassuring to know that there is a group here in the Philippines that supports people suffering from it. The site announces breast cancer conferences and gives inspiring quotations. One page is dedicated to the memory of the brave women who died of breast cancer. Although it is not updated regularly, it is still worth visiting.

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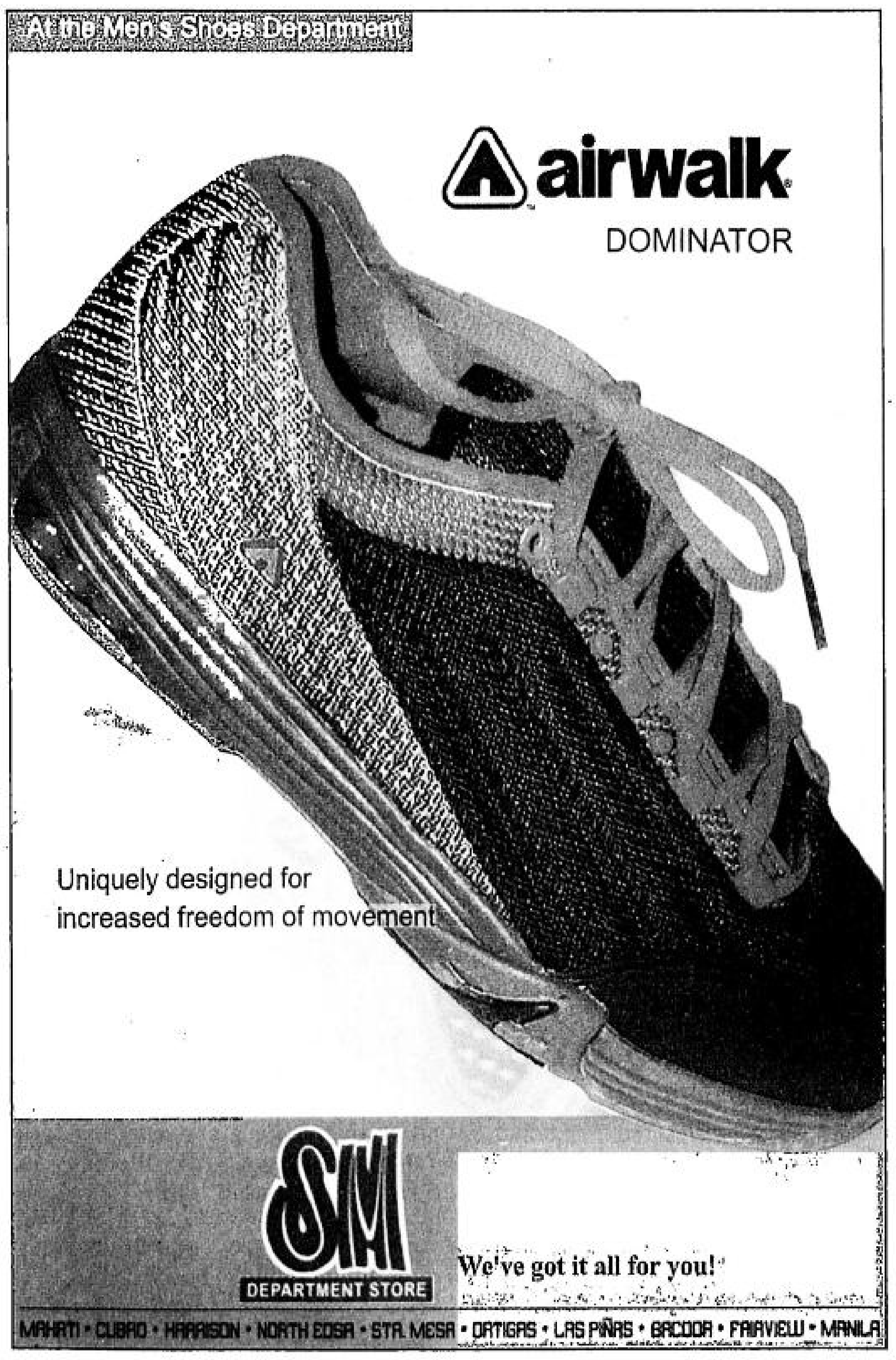

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LIFESTYLE

CAN you give me a home?

While your high school animal-friendly organization is putting up fashions shows and posters campaigning to save the seas and whatnot, PAWS is actually *rescuing* maltreated dogs and suing private companies who abuse animals

Volunteer for a day, advocate for life

Text and photos
By Maui V. Reyes

THE STENCH reminded of when I was around 7 years old and I would drag my mom into a pet shop to see the dogs on display, and every single time my mom would do the same thing: pinch her nose and comment on the reek of dog poop and cat urine.

When I was a child, I wanted to be, among many other things, a veterinarian. I thought it was the only way I could get close to animals since I was asthmatic and my mom would hear none of my "Get me a zoo!" pleas. Even now, with my dogs, I still get asthmatic episodes and give my mom the opportunity to wag that finger of hers in my face and spit out, "I told you so!" But although I know I can never be a vet (due to my asthma and, okay, my lack of interest in any Science subjects), I've found out that I could *actually* save them, or at least do my bit in all this Superman action.

The real heroes, though, are the people behind the Philippine Animal Welfare Society, known as PAWS.

I first heard of their volunteer program through the dogtracker.com website forum. Not wasting any time, I requested for a form, dropped it off and got oriented by Oscar Lei, director of finance. He spelled it out for me—that PAWS was not a society club, and that I was volunteering, meaning no *cha-ching* in the bank. It was solely based on commitment, dedication and the passion to work not only with but *for* the animals. While your high school animal-friendly organization is putting up fashions shows and posters campaigning to save the seas and whatnot, PAWS is actually *rescuing* maltreated dogs and suing private companies who abuse animals.

PEEK-A-BOO. Eyes behind bars

I've never volunteered for anything in my life. Getting me to fix my room on my own is something I have yet to see happen, and here I was at 6 a.m. ready to dedicate my Saturday to helping animals.

Am I complaining? No. Am I mental for not complaining? No. And here's why...

9:15 a.m.—I arrived with Dr. Matel Mendoza at the Marikina Dog Pound. A vet for 10 years now, she joined PAWS only recently, after Nita Lichauco, PAWS president, recruited her to help out with PARC (Philippine Animal Rescue Center). The minute I stepped off the vehicle, I instantly felt my heart break. Around five rows of steel cages, under one roof, held what I estimated as 150 dogs. The ground was wet, and some of the dogs were, too. I could hear Matel asking if the dogs had eaten—we packed some food for them—and was told they had. I started walking down each aisle, looking at all the abandoned, abused and unwanted dogs. Some cages housed two or three puppies who were shivering from the cold water that was used to hose their cages down. "They don't have rubber matting in their cages," I commented. Matel shrugged. "That's dangerous since their feet can get caught in the grills. Some of them have some piece of wood..." I looked at a cage. Some piece of wood, alright. What looked like the size of a chopping board was what kept a tired, weak-looking dog from getting his paws caught in the grills.

From time to time I would stop by a cage and look at the canine inside. Sometimes I'd chance upon a yappy, excited dog, or a trembling, traumatized buddy. But what really grabbed my attention were the weak, yet hopeful-looking dogs who would get up, walk toward me and stick their noses through the steel cages, their tails wagging behind them. All that was missing were the words "Take me home, please!" in neon lights.

Angelo, another PAWS volunteer, met up with us at the pound. He was taking us to his place to check up on a neglected dog. As we piled into the van, he looked over his shoulder and muttered, "Wow, looks cleaner today."

I'd hate to see what the pound looked like yesterday.

10:25 a.m.—We picked up Joy (more like she chased the van when she saw us) and headed over to Angelo's place. Joy has been with PAWS for a year now and is quite the active member, having rescued dogs and handled adoption-follow-ups.

"There's a neglected Golden Retriever near my place," said Angelo. "The owners don't feed it often, and seldom let him out. Usually, I'm the one who takes him for a walk. I'm probably the only one who takes care of him, really, but the owners won't let me have him. They say it's their *guard dog*."

It's dumb enough for someone to think a happy, carefree breed of dog can be a guard dog but it's even dumber to keep in a cage a dog that's supposed to be a guard dog. And that was what these people did, according to Angelo.

"One time he got out of his cage, he didn't go back to his home. He came to my house,"

A VOLUNTEER/ p.D2

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LOGO TURTLEHI 10

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Anna | *Apo Hiking Society* | TONE ANNA
Bakit Ang Babae | *Apo Hiking Society* | TONE BAKITANG
Batang Bata Ka Pa | *Apo Hiking Society* | TONE BATANGBATA
Blue Jeans | *Apo Hiking Society* | TONE BLUEJEANS
Disco Araw-Araw | *Apo Hiking Society* | TONE DISCOARAW
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1 Incomplete | *Shaggy* | TONE INCOMPLETE
2 Butterfly | | TONE BUTTERFLY
3 Superman | *Five For Fighting* | TONE SUPERMANS
4 Horny | | TONE HORNY
5 Lambada | | TONE LAMBADA
6 Farewell | *Farewell To You My Friends* | TONE FAREWELL
7 Pagdating Ng Panahon | *Aiza Seguerra* | TONE PAGDATING
8 Saranggola Ni Pepe | *Celeste Legaspi* | TONE SARANGGOLA
9 Mr. Kupido | *Rachel Alejandro* | TONE MRKUPIDO
10 Leron Leron Sinta | | TONE LERON

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Volunteer for a day, advocate for life

From page D1

Angelo said.

10:45 a.m.—The Golden Retriever could not be left alone. Sammy, the frisky 4-year-old, obviously lacked love and attention. I started petting him and talking to him, and when I moved away from him for a minute, he started barking like mad, demanding my attention.

"They don't want to give him to me," Angelo said. "I'm afraid they'll do something bad to him if I push some more, so I just dropped it. I'd rather have him here, knowing his whereabouts than them taking him somewhere else." With Sammy back in his cage, we returned to Angelo's house, where I found a malnourished black kitten, among other felines.

"We rescued all of them. They would have been road-kill if we didn't pick them up."

11 a.m.—We headed over to Patty Carpio's home where she needed some vet advice for her adopted Lhasa Apso (they named him MokMok), which had ear mites. "I was walking [my other dog] when I saw him in the rain, all alone," she said. "She just followed us home, and I took her in." Matel, who had been given dogs anti-rabies shots all day, gladly cleaned and clipped MokMok's nails.

12:10 p.m.—We received news about neglected dogs being kept in a rental apartment. Posing as fresh graduates looking for an apartment, we got to see the dogs' conditions. Two mongrels in a cage, one malnourished, both male, sharing one feeding dish that had poop in it.

We took a look at the apartment, then made small talk with the owner. Joy made the suggestion that the owner separate the two dogs so they wouldn't fight over the food. The owner told us she wasn't fond of dogs. So why did she have them in the first place?

"Para may kumahol 'pag may pumasok," she said flatly.

2:48 p.m.—Finally, we arrived at PARC. Although still undergoing construction, the animal shelter, set up by PAWS, is patterned after the animal shelters in the United States. Joy was ecstatic about seeing a certain dog, Brownie, who was rescued from dog butchers and was now happily adopted. Brownie was just as happy to see Joy, which explained her nonstop tail wagging and attempts to jump up on her. Brownie was not quick to accept strangers in her "territory" though... she wouldn't let me pet her.

BROWNIE was rescued from a dog butcher.

Then we saw Blacky.

Rescued by one of the carpenters a week before Holy Week, Blacky was hit by a motorist and left to die. Somehow he managed to limp toward PARC's entrance, where the carpenter saw him. At first the carpenter didn't pay any attention to Blacky—just another stray, feral dog. But as night fell and he noticed that the dog hadn't moved an inch from where he lay, the carpenter decided to bring Blacky in. It turned out Blacky's hind legs were broken.

Blacky can walk now by balancing his two front legs, but he has lost control of his bladder. His hind legs may be healing but he is probably forever traumatized.

I got a glimpse of the facilities where PARC would soon be housing rescued and abandoned animals. As more funds come in, PARC will expand. So far, this one structure has around 10 "rooms," each of which can fit in three dogs. There is a small veterinary clinic where Matel will most probably spend most of her time.

A small utility case that a vet had left in the clinic carried old syringes and expired medicines, among other stuff. "We need fresh supplies," I said under my breath, holding up a syringe that had lost its cap.

4:30 p.m.—We were back at the PAWS Headquarters. Two volunteers, Gabe and Icel, had finished sticking custom-made stickers to cans they would place at certain gas stations around the metro. Pagong, a puppy around 3 months old, was running around the room, jumping up on everyone he saw. Nita was beaming with pride.

"He's going to be a Dr. Dog when he grows up!" she said. Dr. Dog is a program conducted by PAWS wherein dogs with good temperaments are brought to schools and hospitals to educate and calm patients. It is a proven theory that dogs who are around patients are able to calm them and speed up the healing process, thus the term "Therapy Dog."

Stand up for the animals

The minute I got home, I couldn't help but hug all my dogs. I thought about the dogs I saw and all the other dogs that I didn't get to see that day. I cringed at the memory of my mom giving away a dog we owned once simply because he was getting too annoyingly loud and kept turning my mom's garden upside down. The next day I found out that the carpenter to whom my mom gave the dog ate him. The guilt wouldn't leave me.

I recalled Joy scolding Patty for constantly reporting to PAWS about mistreated animals around her area but never doing anything about it herself.

"You have to learn to talk to them, stand up for these animals. PAWS cannot do it all on our own, we need people like you who will tell these owners that they're violating Republic Act No. 8485, that they're being cruel, and these animals deserve all the love and attention they can get!"

That would apply to me, too, I said to myself.

I remember those cans Oscar and the volunteers stacked up. I looked at one of the many stickers on the table. Each had a picture of a malnourished, sick dog next to a healthy, happy dog, with the caption "The difference between them is your COMPASSION."

I couldn't agree more.

To volunteer for PAWS, e-mail paws_hq@compass.com.ph, or drop by the PAWS Headquarters at 87 Small Horseshoe Drive, New Manila, QC. Print out a form from the PAWS website, http://www.pitstopit.com/paws3.

E-mail the author at volcanogirl28@hotmail.com

Fund-raiser for a sick friend

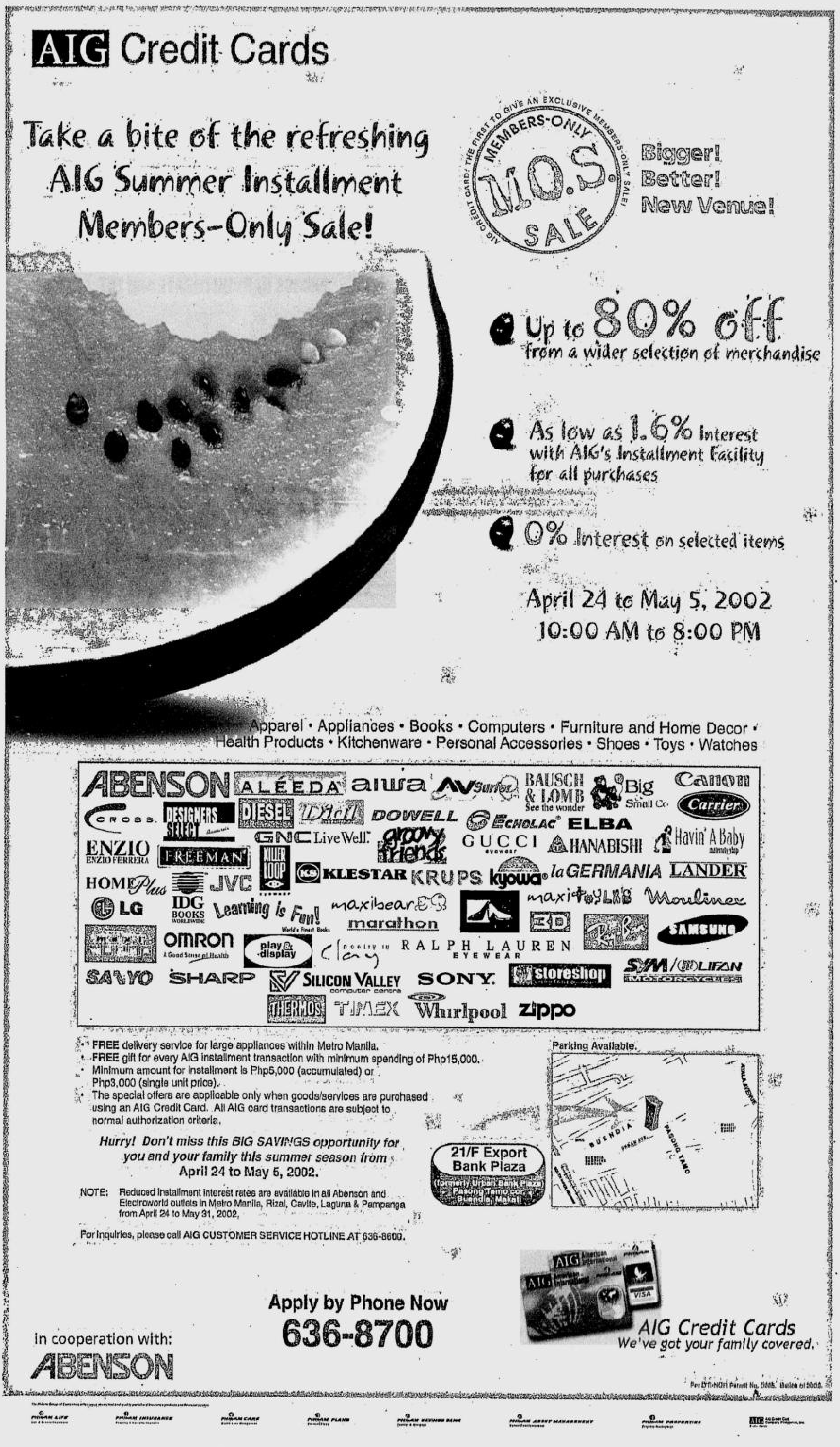
DURING GRADUATION practice, Justine Relova and her friend Kitkat thought of having a benefit concert for their friend, 17-year-old Aldo Ureta, who is suffering from brain tumor. It's tough for these girls since it's their first time to organize such event on their own. And many people are pretty tight on money. Not only that, they will have to top the first concert for Aldo organized by his 4-O classmates at the Ateneo, a very successful one which featured Chicosci, Monsterbot and Ciudad.

But topping the previous concert doesn't really matter now. What matters more is how they can help Aldo. For the past few weeks, they have been cramming to make this almost impossible dream happen on May 2 at UP's Bahay ng Alumni. A person who was trying to help them accidentally faxed the draft of the proposal (complete with their names) to several companies. To prevent more boo-boo's and because of lack of time and experience, they were forced to move the date to June 14 or 15.

"Aldo has dreams and aspirations. His sickness has stripped him of all that he has held sacred. Please help him regain everything that he has lost by supporting this fund-raiser on his behalf. Thank you and God bless you for your generosity," says Justine.

If you would like to help (donate, give advice, play, etc.), contact Justine at 0917-2796734 and 631-0704, and Cams at 0917-2503821 or e-mail camdlr@hotmail.com.

Tammy David



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ADS' CAUSES and EFFECTS

Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

Ads of cause-oriented groups try to scare, uplift or inspire to sell the ideas they are espousing

LAKBAY TV seldom breaks into commercials but when it does, they are usually cause-oriented ads. We got to know the kind of work ABS-CBN's varied Bantay programs do through those ads, for instance. Other than "Lakbay," we saw ads by cause-oriented groups in GMA's "Maynila" and "Pira-pirasong Pangarap." Some of those groups whose causes and effects (on me) I got to know are:

PCSO, "Likas na Mapagkalinga." With a joyous jingle about kindness and benevolence, this ad begins and ends with the ever-dramatic reaching out of hands (only two pairs actually—adult's and a child's). It cites the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office's involvement in education, medical missions, rescue operations, orphanages, home for the aged, sports development and livelihood programs. The end shows the PCSO chair, "Honeygirl," sister of the controversial Luis "Chavit" Singson, and President GMA.

Effect: I miss Jamby (Madrigal) and her "Mara Clara" theme song-inspired ditty.

Casino Filipino, "Katulong N'yo, Katulong ng Sambayanang Pilipino." Minus the uplifting jingle, this ad is similar to the PCSO commercial, only dull and boring. The rundown of services it performs is similar to the sweepstakes office's list. The Casino Filipino ends like an old Mutya ng Pilipinas Beauty Contest (in fact, it claims to be one of the sponsors of the competition). An inset shows schoolchildren walking at night on a lighted street.

Effect: I want to see Anthony Pangilinan emcee the Mutya ng Pilipinas again. The schoolchildren should be reprimanded by their parents.

Haribon. It tells the tale of an endangered species in a black and white, *cartoonish* style. With only one eye in the beginning, it is then enclosed in a cell. A narrator pricks our conscience by saying the creature is behind bars due to illegal logging and probably hunting. The sketch is soon completed and the eye is shown as belonging to a bird (of a Philippine eagle, perhaps?).

Effect: I was half-wishing the bird would turn out to be Jolina, the Ibong Adarna.

Bantay Kalikasan, "Magtanim ng Puno sa La Mesa." The ad somberly intones that 10 trees are needed to solve the pollution caused by a single car, and it takes P100 to grow a single tree. The ad asks for donations and help in planting trees in La Mesa to help eliminate air pollution *(Linisin natin ang hangin, pati na ang konsensya natin)*.

Effect: Suddenly, I want trees in my garden converted to cash.

The Funeral Car, "Stop Air Pollution." This ad features a luxurious car—seemingly elegant, powerful and comfortable. *"This could be yours,"* it says, *"if you don't…* (unfortunately, I didn't catch what followed)." The luxurious car turned out to be a funeral car. Whatever word I missed, I think it meant to convey a message similar to Bantay's: Stop air pollution as it reduces the life expectancy of 80 percent of Metro Manilans.

Effect: My *chedeng*-expectancy remains at 80 percent.

Bantay Usok. "Six thousand people are diagnosed with respiratory diseases every month," according to this smoke-filled ad which makes the viewers' eyes smart especially with the sloppy scoring, "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." Black-and-white shots of different people flash onscreen, covering their noses to avoid inhaling the air that's so thick with smoke.

Effect: Is it really the smoke or am I just farting too much?

Bantay Baterya. Strong in imagination, this ad may not say much but suggests a lot. The sight of what seems like blood dripping for five seconds or so might create a little terror. The viewer is stunned to realize it was not blood but toxic leaks from a car battery that was not properly disposed of. The ad ends with a message that the leaks could cause death.

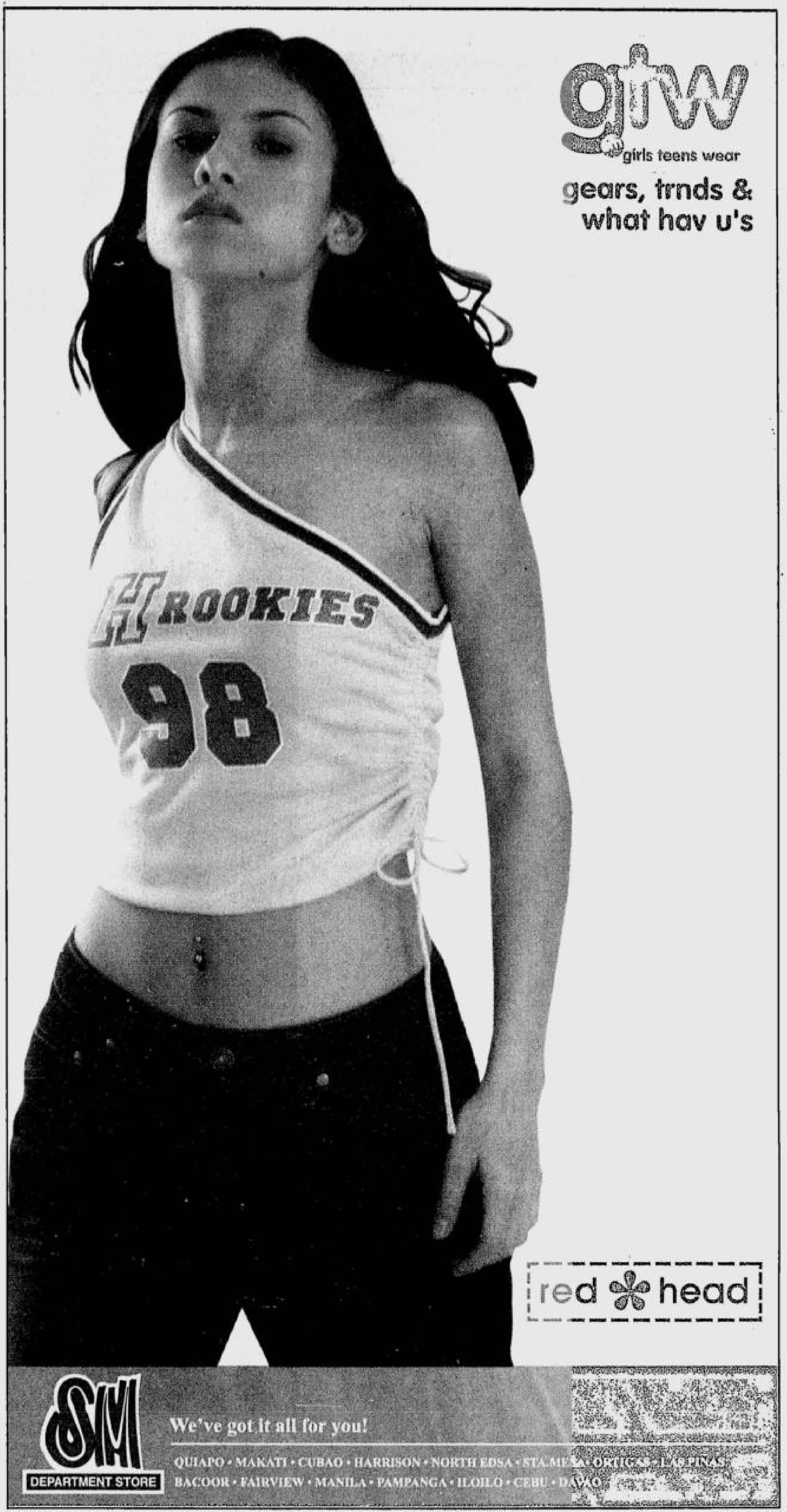
Effect: Can we say those cars are infected with VD?

Ariel, "Katulong sa Pagsulong." Certainly not to be sneezed at is this product's attempt to change the lives of some women through its livelihood program funded through our patronage of Ariel. With its high-profile endorser (after *Mareng* Winnie Monsod), Sen. Loren Legarda, Ariel is sure to sponsor *sari-sari* stores to support the starving participants of the next people power.

Effect: I want Gelli de Belen and Wacky, her "low bat" son (in a commercial) next in line as endorsers.

Youth Build, Habitat for Humanity. A group of young men convince a peer not to worry about the hassle, making the viewers think initially it is about some nonsensical fraternity ritual. The young people are actually recruiting for Youth Build of Habitat, a humanitarian organization which includes former American President Jimmy Carter among its founders that builds houses for the poor.

Effect: So these are the kids who will work on my future house…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"MOULIN-ROUGED." Joyce San Antonio and Telisha Jean

GROOVE NATIONALS. Kara Tolentino and Edge Pamute

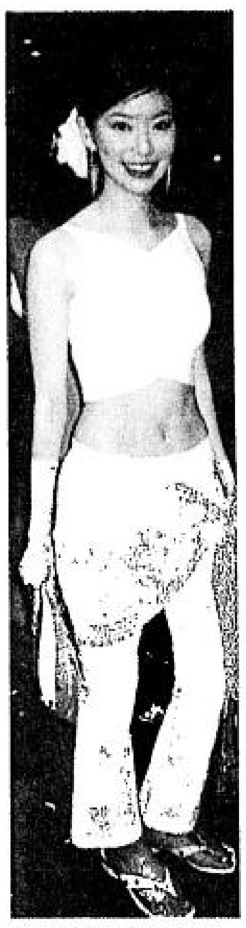
OXYGEN, please! Mary Jolly and Derek Ramsey

MYX-ING IT UP. Ed Feist and Mike Constantino

CAL-CARRIE'S gals Rosario Herrera and Chere Du

DIET Coke, please! Diether Ocampo and Tina Pamintuan spotted at the Studio 23 shebang

Give in to 'Temptation'



WHITE HOT. Sexy and stylish Bianca Valerio

VJ SPUNKY. Clara Balaguer strikes a pose.

Tim Yap

"I DON'T like that show. It lacks morals—puts couples on one island and tries to break them apart, only to reconcile in the end," said an ace lensman about the much awaited "Temptation Island 2" reality TV series on sassy Studio 23.

But that's precisely the point. The show has had quite a following. I have a friend who rushes after yoga class and skips the yummy potluck dinner just to be able to catch the steamy series. Ha! The lure of the flesh...

Fridays ago, amid the madness of the midnight sale season, "Wet, Wild and Wicked," a Rejoice-sponsored swinger's bash to signal the start of the sexy, sexy "Temptation Island 2" series, titillated the scene like no other launch party could.

Couples entered together, only to be met by a bevy of bodacious bods, all waiting for the moment "to taste or not to taste the forbidden fruit."

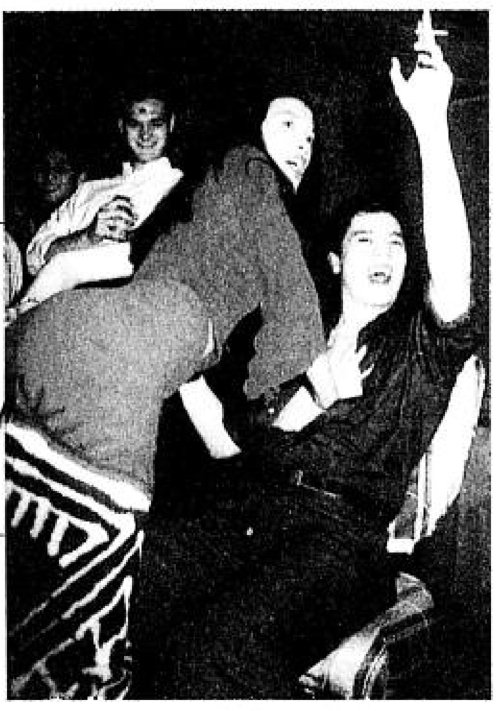
Fleshy foreplay was parade of the Tabu and Quicksilver summer collections, modeled by the elite members of TAO (the newly formed Talent Agents Organization, that society of models out to safeguard the less-glam side of the industry, a great group, if you ask me). Glorietta's West Drive Area had to be closed to traffic as Manila's partyphiles—celebs, expats and models—all gathered to toast the "meet" (or shall I say "meat") market.

Raunchy revelry

From that point, it was "anything goes" for the city's nocturnal set. So many scenes were being reenacted right before my eyes—and these ones were totally not scripted! I spotted a "secret" couple doing a torrid tongue lash while the girl's boyfriend wasn't looking. During the "bring me" game, Studio 23 hostess **Bianca Araneta** asked for a "sexy man's undies," to which a European guy went onstage, pulled his pants down and surprise! He wasn't wearing any.

Lap dances were taking place by the bar, strip games were being held to the delight of the raunchy revelers, both at Venezia and Buddha Bar, where **Marc Nelson** was master of "kink-ivities." Both bars became boudoirs bordering on bordello.

Outside, DJ slash Studio 23 and Groove Nation prime man **Edge Pamute** was having a ball spinning his brand of "cruise-y" music as guests tried to pick each other up in the street.



LAPPING IT UP. Livin' la vida loca with Mikey at the Temptation Island party

VJ MYX-ED. Jon Salkin strides along the ramp with his Admate mate.

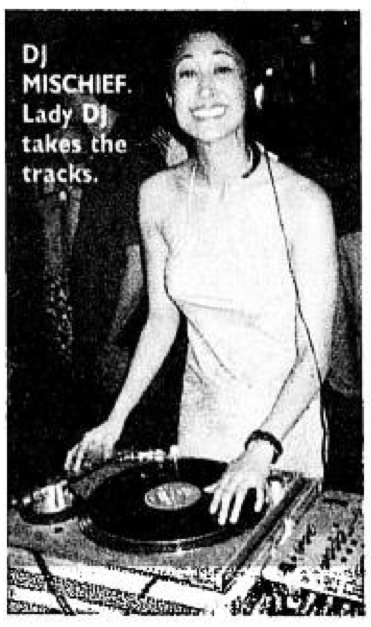
Later, the percussion beat filled the air as Studio 23's **Mike Constantino** jammed with Myx VJ **Clara Balaguer**, who was doing such fabulous and soulful vocal calisthenics I swear she deserves a recording contract. Add to that former veejay **Paul Hammond**, who provided Clara a funky rap partner.

I have not seen an event that gathered as many models (it was cosponsored by TAO, remember?) and the scene's expatriate crowd (What? We still have expats?) as that sexy, sexy mid-summer evening. Conversation flowed freely ("My girlfriend is frigid..." "So, when do you want to hook up?" Overheard from a prominent, uh, promiscuous, "very, very good-looking guy") and pick up lines were aplenty.

Wanna have a bite of what transpired that night? Check this out.

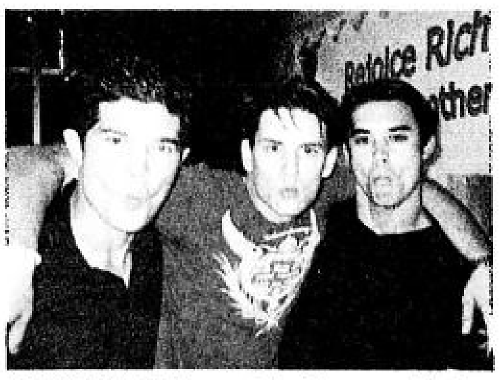
SEX GODESSES. Watch out for Sex and the City's bar tour launch this April 30!

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

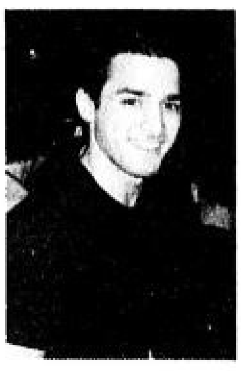


DJ MISCHIEF. Lady DJ takes the tracks.

STUDIO 23 sirens Gia Apela and Jenny Serrano



PROFESSIONAL good-looking guys Rich Lozano, Geoff Brizz and Brad Turvey



JAMIL Ahmad, the face that launched a thousand products

ANONYMOUS NOW. Ayen Santos is part of the A-list.

'Sex and the City'

CALLING all HBO's "Sex and the City" fans in Manila! Starting April 30, HBO is kicking off a series of bar tours to welcome the new season of "Sex and the City" that is premiering exclusively on HBO, May 14, 10 p.m. New episodes premiere every Tuesday at 10 p.m.

These parties are designed to give fans a sneak preview of the highly anticipated new season. In the last season, Aidan was heartbroken after Carrie confessed her affair with Mr. Big. If you want to be the first to find out what happens to the girls in the new season, this is your chance.

Now what about Samantha? I heard she turned lesbian in one of the episodes. But, hey, I don't want to ruin it for you—just tune in to that boob tube, or join the bar tour to find out!

The bar tour will be launched at Venezia on April 30, 9 p.m. Now don't forget to wear your Manolos, sweeties.

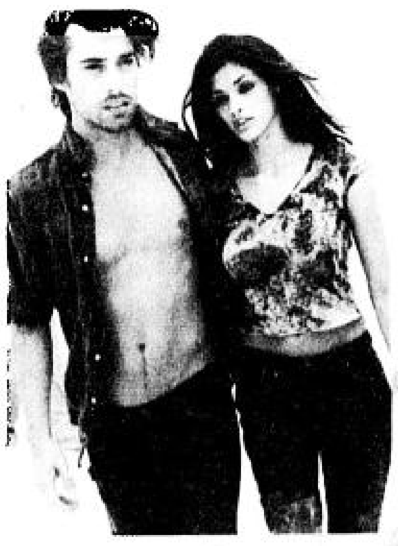
HOT, HOT, HOT. Marc Nelson, Mals Ledesma, Bianca Araneta and Yaparazzi

Fashion lensman combines beauty of landscape and clothes

AS if in a dream, photographer Raphael Mazzucco combines the stark white sand dunes of Alamogordo, New Mexico with the beautiful faces of Guess? Spring 2002 campaign.

The images convey the sexy, young and adventurous feel that is Guess?, while revealing a mysterious and decidedly worldly flair to the photographs.

Shot over four days and guided by Guess? creative director Paul Marciano, the images exude a sensuality that captures the spirit of the landscape. The White Sands National Monument was the perfect backdrop for a photo shoot that revealed both the beauty of the landscape and the clothes. Focusing on denim, the pictorial showcases new styles and fabrics for Guess?—linen pieces and T-shirts, swimwear and lightweight tops, accessories, like belts, handbags and footwear, for the men's line, among others.



Custom pieces were made especially for the shoot to enhance the new washes and detailing of the spring collection. G Brand is also featured through select images.

Shop online, read the latest information on Guess? events, advertising campaigns, models, fashion tips, product care, or find an international store at www.guess.com, www.guesskids.com and www.babyguess.com.

Go matte to beat the heat

Makeover 911

Kinny Salas

THOSE of you who have dry skin probably love the continuous supply of moisture provided by summer. I bet your skin has never been so supple and makeup just slides on despite your trimmed down skin regimen of no moisturizer. Well, for those who have normal to oily skin, this is the most frustrating time for your makeup routine.

Rule of summer makeup: The "barely there" makeup look is a hit all year round but especially so in the summer. The key word for summer is sheer makeup. Skin should show through and we must look the picture of health. The secret weapon is to go matte on cosmetics.

Skin care. We have been told that soap is bad for our skin because it is drying. Well this may be what O.S. girls need for this time of year. For those who are soap-sensitive, switch to cleansing gels like Biore or L'Oreal Hydrafresh or liquid cleansers like Neutrogena Acne Wash and Clean and Clear Facial Wash. Cleansing foams like Zui Face Wash and cleansing bars like Godiva Green Tea and Extraderm Bleaching Soap work without tightening the skin to the point of discomfort. Follow with an oil-free toner or astringent. The most important step is to exfoliate with AHA or BHA and tretinoin to dissolve dead skin cells that block pore openings and cause pimples. For those with large pores try pore-refining cleansing trios like Neutrogena and L'Oreal's. Those who find that your regular moisturizers make you break out, drop them altogether or switch to a fluid, gel or serum formula. Check out Clarins, L'Oreal and Pond's.

Add-ons. Oil blotting sheets and skin mattifyers. For the latter I suggest Godiva Green Tea Moisture with SPF 15 or Zui Oil Control Cream. These can be worn alone if your skin is in decent shape or under foundation if a little more coverage is needed.

Matte foundation. The cosmetic industry has come up with better formulas that no longer resemble fake ceramic masks. Today's versions control oil but let the skin show through as well. You have these in liquid form, cream-to-powder or plain powder foundation. For combination oily skins, I suggest the first two formulas; for very oily, I suggest powder foundation. Powder foundation also gives discreet coverage to skin imperfections like pimple scars and discolorations. Pressed powders are not the same as powder foundations as these give very lame coverage and do not hold back oil as successfully. Although skin gets darker in summer you can keep your foundation shade because oil on skin will make pigments look darker throughout the day.

Concealers. Pick a formula that is specified for your skin type and blend in on necessary areas only. These are not foundation substitutes. After applying foundation take a long look. Do you still really need concealers?

Powder. Loose and pressed. A revelation from Bobbi Brown—those with oily skin should not use yellow-tinted powder in summer as your face will look pasty. Yellow powder will only work with truly pale yellow skin colors like those with Chinese, Japanese or Korean ancestry. Invest in one that is a shade lighter than your skin color as oily skin tends to make pigments darker. Apply powder with a puff instead of a brush for more oil control.

The colors: Go matte!

Eyes. Forget creamy, glossy, shimmery textures of eye makeup that will turn into oil slicks before the hour is up. Stick to matte formulas in eye shadows. That means powder. Use light-colored powders for highlight; waterproof mascara and eyeliners are the most reliable. You may want to use your powder shadow as eyeliner for less smearing.

Cheeks. Gel blush for bare skin and powder blush above foundation. Choose colors—nothing too dark or uselessly pale.

Lips. Sure, there is no better way to achieve the sheer sexy lip of summer but with lip gloss. A lot of you may have noticed they don't stay long enough as is and with summer they seem to melt off even faster. For lasting power, apply lip liner underneath on entire lip before slathering on the gloss. The effect will still be sheer but it will last longer. Have a tendency toward dry lips? Apply lip balm under lip liner then apply gloss.

For questions or products you want to road-test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax to 897-4805

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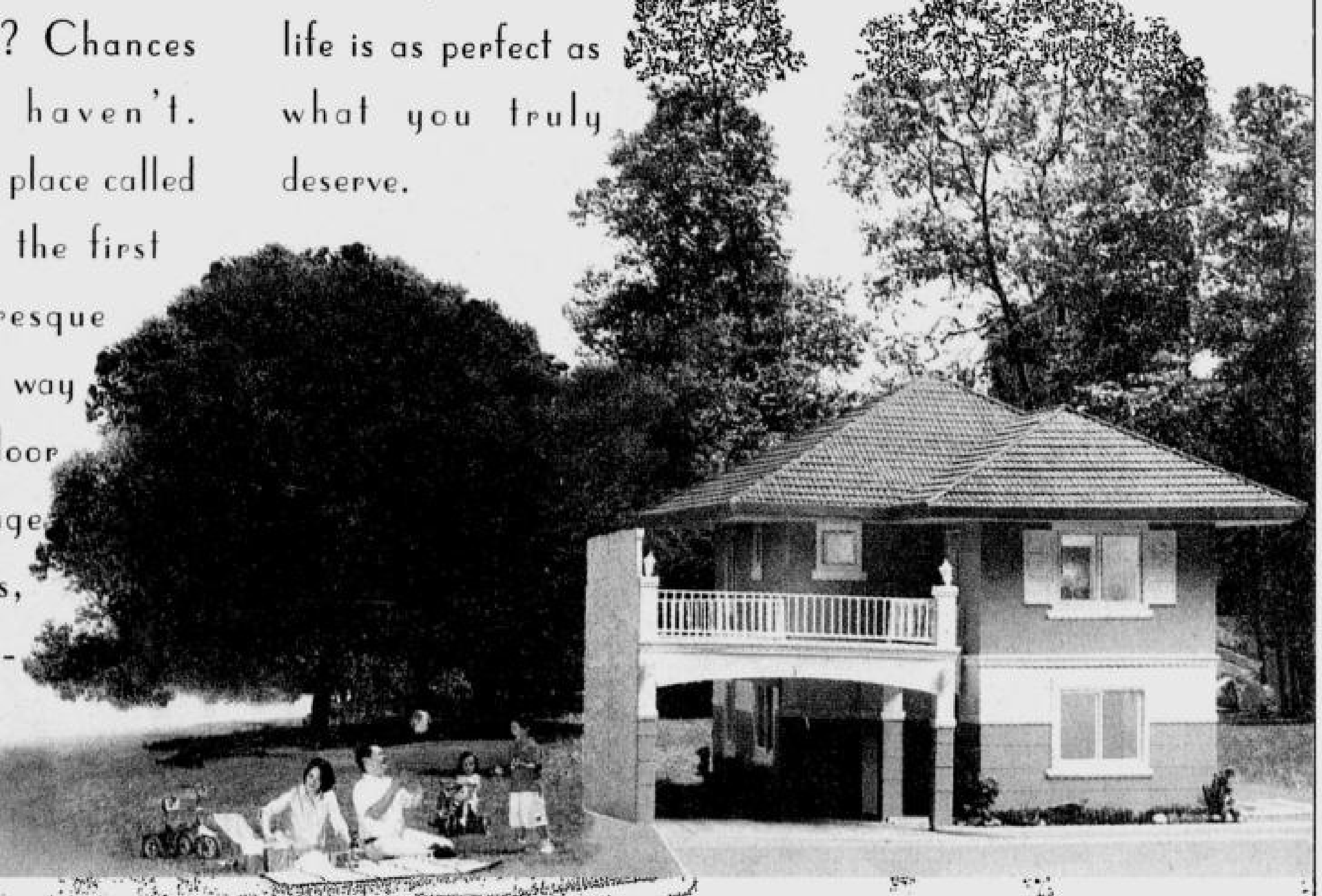
Commune with nature everyday in a place just a few minutes away

When was the last time you saw a most splendid dewdrop that your jaw dropped? Or woke up to the sound of melodious chirping by early morning guests... without traveling miles and hours from Metro Manila? Chances are, you haven't. Experience this in a place called St. Alexandra Estates, the first Ayala community in picturesque Antipolo. A place where serenity is a way of life and Mother Nature your next-door neighbor. A Mediterranean inspired village accessible to the business districts of Ortigas, Makati and the exclusive schools of Quezon City--complete with all the amenities Ayala-managed subdivisions are known for. The houses use the innovative French Phenix building system, which combines durability and space optimization. With 60 different in-house payment schemes to suit your finances. It is a sanctuary for you and your family. A nest where dewdrops welcome the dawn of each day, and where life is as perfect as what you truly deserve.

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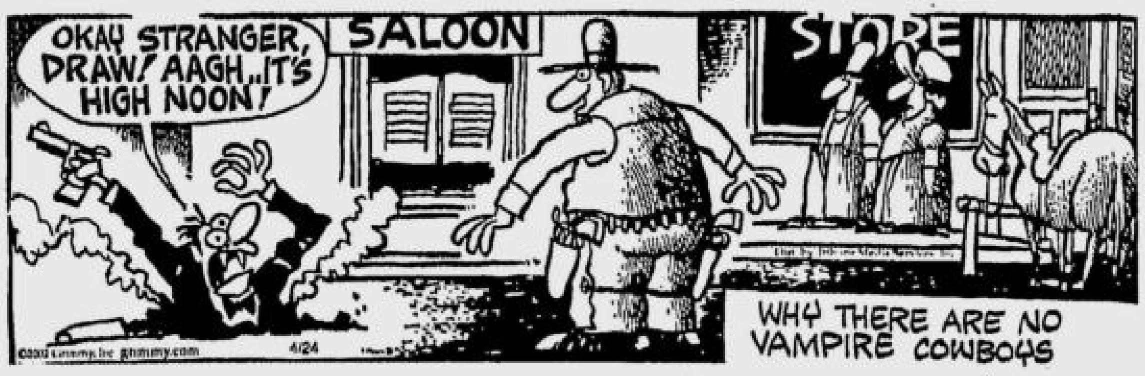
Right beside St. Gabriel Heights. Special discounts for early buyers. Grand Open House on April 28.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


OKAY STRANGER, DRAW! AAGH..IT'S HIGH NOON!
SALOON
STORE
WHY THERE ARE NO VAMPIRE COWBOYS
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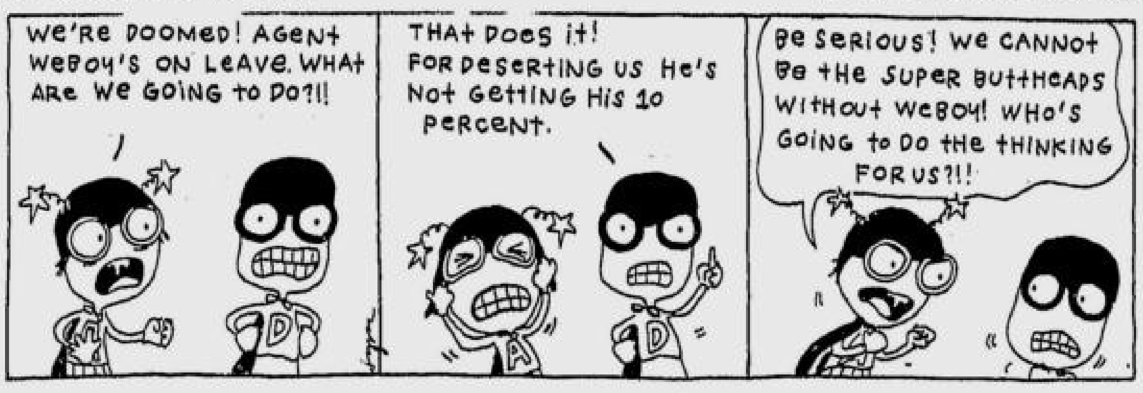
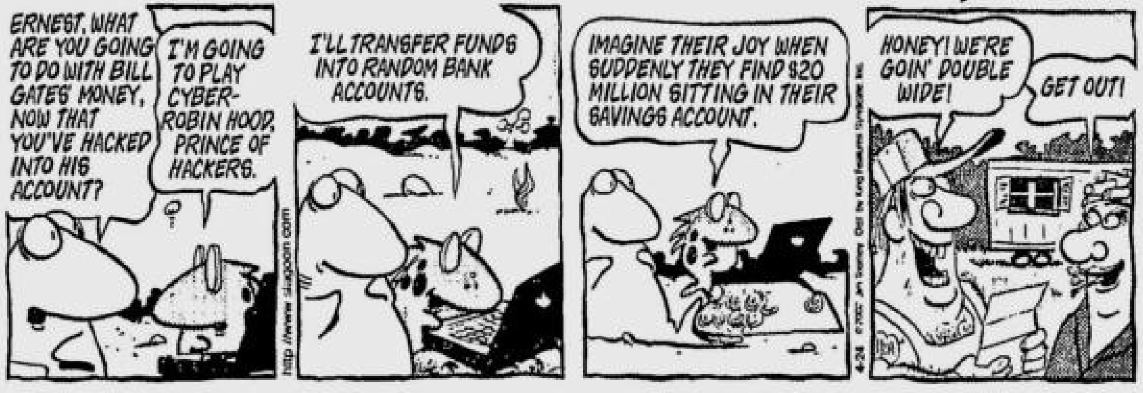
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WE'RE DOOMED! AGENT WEBOY'S ON LEAVE. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?!!
THAT DOES IT! FOR DESERTING US HE'S NOT GETTING HIS 10 PERCENT.
BE SERIOUS! WE CANNOT BE THE SUPER BUTTHEADS WITHOUT WEBOY! WHO'S GOING TO DO THE THINKING FOR US?!!

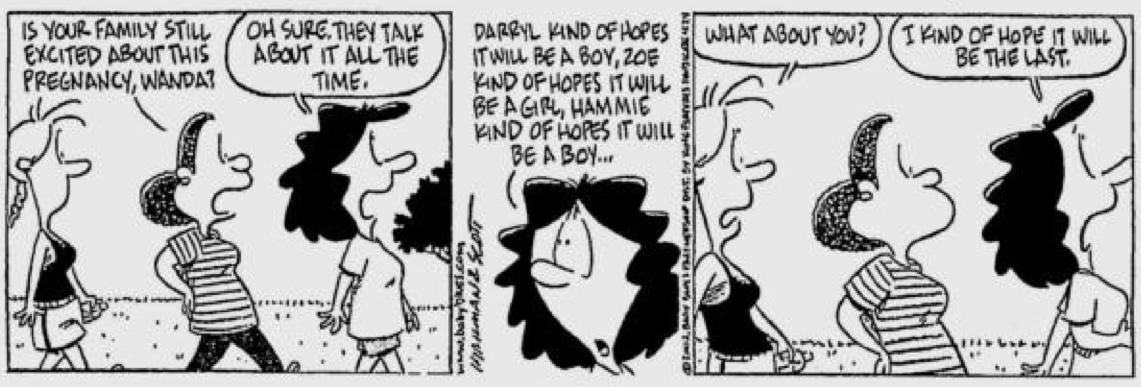
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


ERNEST, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH BILL GATES' MONEY, NOW THAT YOU'VE HACKED INTO HIS ACCOUNT?
I'M GOING TO PLAY CYBER-ROBIN HOOD, PRINCE OF HACKERS.
I'LL TRANSFER FUNDS INTO RANDOM BANK ACCOUNTS.
IMAGINE THEIR JOY WHEN SUDDENLY THEY FIND $20 MILLION SITTING IN THEIR SAVINGS ACCOUNT.
HONEY! WE'RE GOIN' DOUBLE WIDE!
GET OUT!
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


IS YOUR FAMILY STILL EXCITED ABOUT THIS PREGNANCY, WANDA?
OH SURE. THEY TALK ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME.
DARRYL KIND OF HOPES IT WILL BE A BOY, ZOE KIND OF HOPES IT WILL BE A GIRL, HAMMIE KIND OF HOPES IT WILL BE A BOY...
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I KIND OF HOPE IT WILL BE THE LAST.
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HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Barbra Streisand, Shirley MacLaine, Stanley Kauffman, Eric Bogosian

Happy Birthday: You will have greater insight into matters pertaining to work this year. You mustn't let personal problems interfere with what you are trying to accomplish. You will communicate well with both business and personal partners. Intellectual activity with friends, family and peers will be stimulating and rewarding. Your numbers are 9, 17, 21, 25, 32, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Be careful when operating equipment or machinery. You'll have a tendency to be careless. You may become emotional if someone you work with is critical.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Look over your personal papers or work on a hobby or creative project—something that will make you feel better about yourself. You will learn something new.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't do anything to upset matters at a personal level. Keep your thoughts to yourself no matter how hard that might be. Focus on yourself, your ideas and your future.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll discover that your friends are there to support you if you need a helping hand. Work-related matters might be put on hold but don't sit around waiting for things to happen.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): If you don't count on getting any help you won't be disappointed. Avoid expensive outings, clubs or lending to people who aren't likely to pay you back.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will be sensitive when it comes to criticism but must learn to take it, especially if you are going to dish it out. Pay attention to details when doing professional jobs.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll be fascinated by secret intrigues. Avoid involvement with colleagues or anyone who works in your industry. Problems will develop if you aren't discreet.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You can contribute to a cause you believe in but only by offering your worthy suggestions and your time. Once you step over the line and donate cash you will be in over your head.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Partnerships may be under duress today. Plan a busy schedule so you don't have to bother with emotional issues. Take on a physical challenge and you will receive far more satisfaction.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll be light years ahead when it comes to your ideas and intentions. By sharing your thoughts with people you look up to you will find yourself moving in a positive direction getting the kinds of results you're looking for.

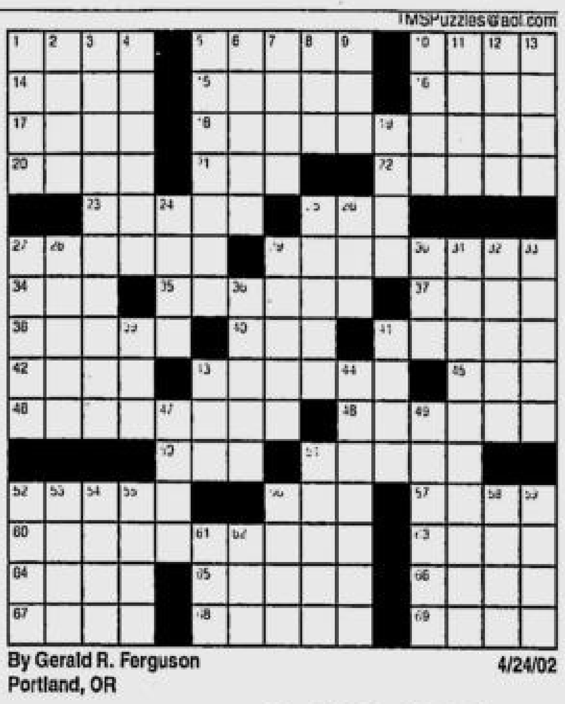
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Lack of funds may stand in the way of having a good time. You should be concentrating on developing one of your brilliant ideas and turning your financial situation around.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Problems with an older relative or friend are likely to crop up today. By standing by and helping you will discover that this person does have wisdom to offer you in return. Be observant and listen carefully.

Birthday Baby: You will be precise and to the point. Your ideas will always be practical and well thought-out. You will plan everything carefully and leave no room for error. You are a bit of a perfectionist.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Gerald R. Ferguson
Portland, OR

4/24/02

ACROSS
1 Webber hit
5 Poet Alighieri
10 Sudden pain
14 Stead
15 Messages by computer
16 Drunkard
17 Algerian port
18 Sidekick
20 Training rooms
21 T. Turner channel
22 Be as one
23 Mexican moola
25 Actor Cariou
27 Out of __
29 Struggles for superiority
34 Balin or Claire
35 Get away
37 Flat-bottomed boat
38 Having radial stripes
40 Exist
41 Lake by Reno
42 Singletons
43 Religious holiday
45 Any __ time
46 Translations
48 Wear out the welcome mat
50 PGA peg
51 Drive back
52 Humble
56 Performed
57 Writer Oz
60 Close pal
63 Tibetan priest
64 Author Bagnold
65 Customary practice
66 & others
67 Yellow and Black
68 Howled
69 Fender damage

DOWN
1 Stop up
2 Breezy
3 Cooperative performer
4 Day's end
5 Creditors' opposites
6 Last words
7 Political cartoonist (1840-1902)
8 Small bird
9 Pixie
10 Gulp
11 Cake layer
12 __ of Cleves
13 Augur
19 Go on a tirade
24 Parakeet staple
25 Runs at a steady gait
26 Compass pt.
27 Imperial Russian Ballet, today
28 Nonsensical
29 Has concern (for)
30 NASA's ISS partner
31 Fellow student
32 Worker's equipment
33 Sorenstam or Borg, e.g.
36 "Allie" star
39 Double bend
41 Pack down
43 Opponent
44 Recolored irregularly
47 Bit of gossip
49 Rang
51 Narrow crest
52 Vigoda and Lincoln
53 Treat for Rover
54 Most land
55 Puts in grass
56 6/6/44
58 Muscat's country
59 Preserving substance
61 Fella
62 NATO member

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

A	N	G	E	R	■	O	P	E	C	■	B	A	S	H
N	E	R	V	E	■	L	U	L	U	■	U	N	T	O
T	R	E	E	H	U	G	G	E	R	■	S	N	I	P
S	O	Y	■	E	T	A	■	C	I	P	H	E	R	S
■	■	■	G	A	M	■	S	T	O	O	L	■	■	■
S	T	A	R	T	O	U	T	■	S	P	E	W	E	R
N	O	L	A	■	S	N	O	B	■	S	A	R	G	E
I	R	I	S	■	T	I	M	E	R	■	G	E	R	E
F	R	E	S	H	■	T	A	L	E	■	U	S	E	S
F	E	N	C	E	S	■	C	A	S	S	E	T	T	E
■	■	■	U	R	I	C	H	■	C	A	R	■	■	■
F	A	S	T	O	N	E	■	S	U	B	■	S	E	C
A	L	I	T	■	F	L	O	W	E	R	G	I	R	L
L	O	D	E	■	U	L	N	A	■	E	A	G	L	E
L	E	E	R	■	L	O	O	T	■	S	I	N	E	W

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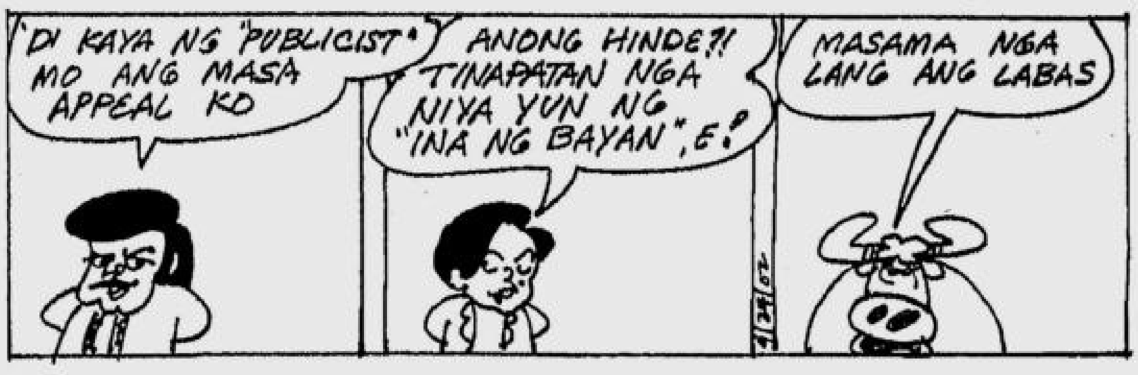
4/24/02

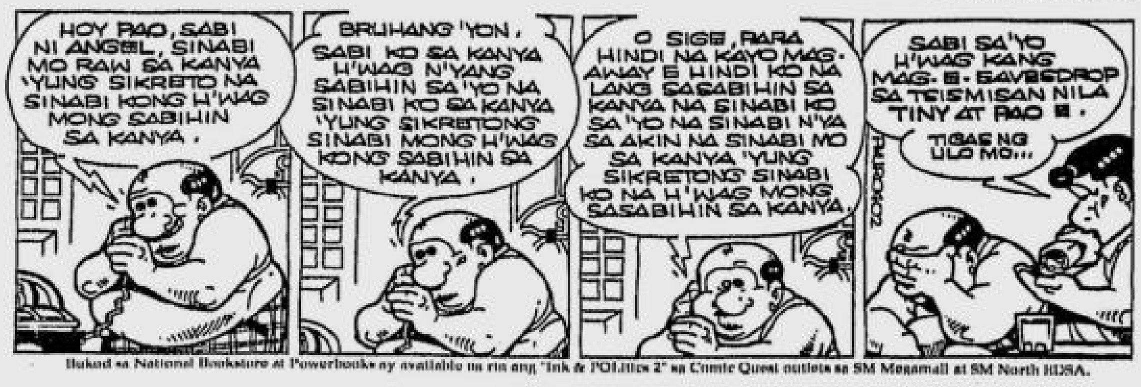
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'DI KAYA NG 'PUBLICIST' MO ANG MASA APPEAL KO
ANONG HINDE?! TINAPATAN NGA NIYA YUN NG "INA NG BAYAN", E!
MASAMA NGA LANG ANG LABAS

PUGAD BABOY

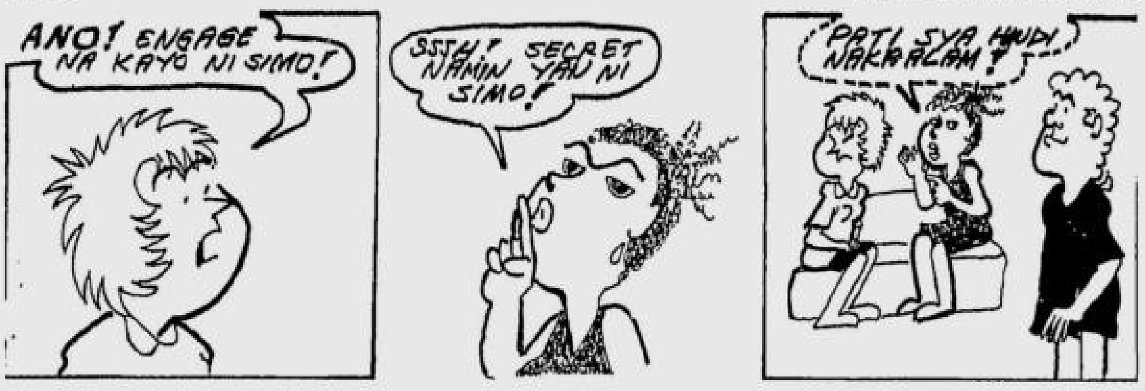
BY P.M. JUNIOR


HOY PAO, SABI NI ANGEL, SINABI MO RAW SA KANYA 'YUNG SIKRETO NA SINABI KONG H'WAG MONG SABIHIN SA KANYA.
BRUHANG 'YON. SABI KO SA KANYA H'WAG N'YANG SABIHIN SA'YO NA SINABI KO SA KANYA 'YUNG SIKRETONG SINABI MONG H'WAG KONG SABIHIN SA KANYA.
O SIGE, PARA HINDI NA KAYO MAG-AWAY E HINDI KO NA LANG SASABIHIN SA KANYA NA SINABI KO SA'YO NA SINABI N'YA SA AKIN NA SINABI MO SA KANYA 'YUNG SIKRETONG SINABI KO NA H'WAG MONG SASABIHIN SA KANYA.
SABI SA'YO H'WAG KANG MAG-E-EAVSEDROP SA TSISMISAN NILA TINY AT PAO E.
TIGAS NG ULO MO...

Bukod sa National Bookstore at Powerbooks ay available na rin ang "Ink & POLItics 2" sa Comic Quest outlets sa SM Megamall at SM North EDSA.

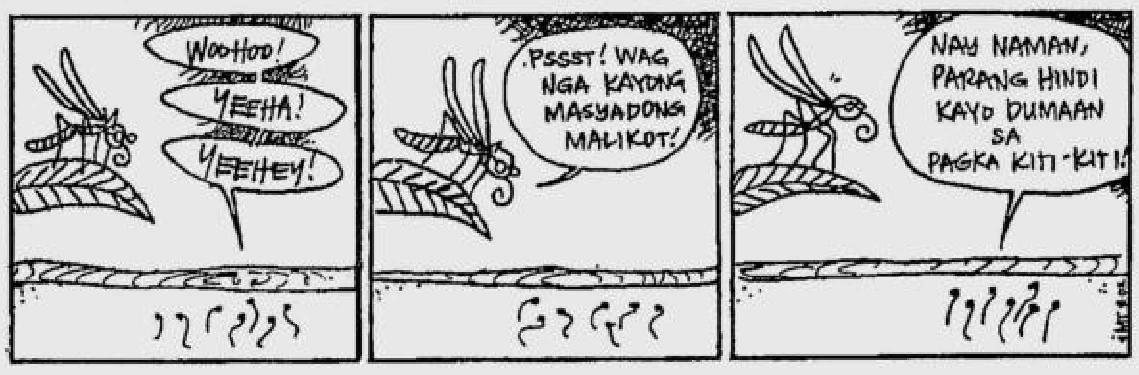
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANO! ENGAGE NA KAYO NI SIMO!
SSTH! SECRET NAMIN YAN NI SIMO!
PATI SYA HINDI NAKAALAM?

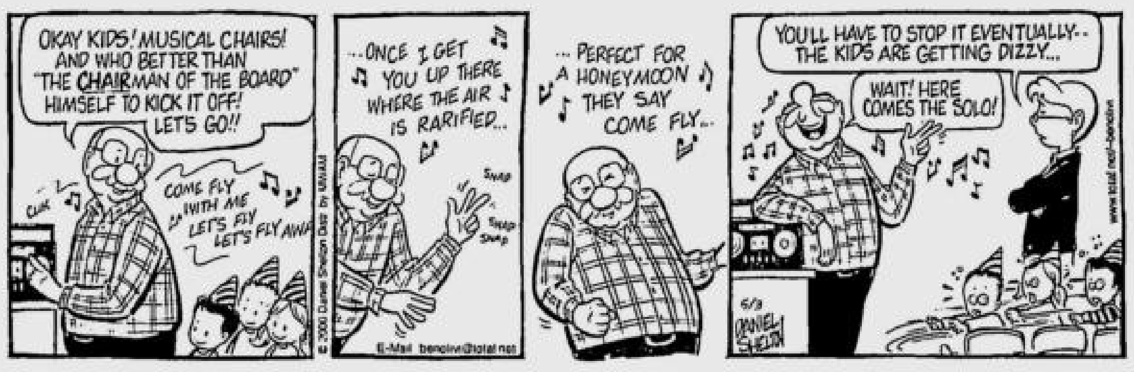
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


WOOHOO!
YEEHA!
YEEHEY!
PSSST! WAG NGA KAYONG MASYADONG MALIKOT!
NAY NAMAN, PARANG HINDI KAYO DUMAAN SA PAGKA KITI-KITI!

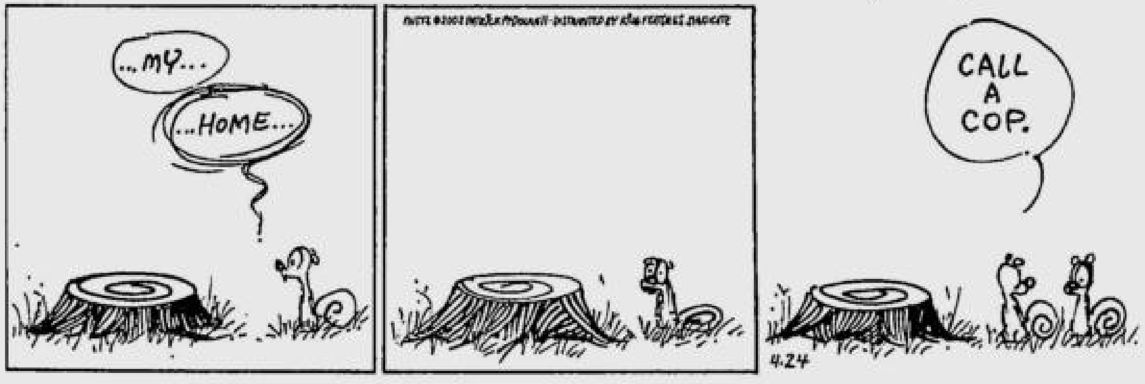
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


OKAY KIDS! MUSICAL CHAIRS! AND WHO BETTER THAN "THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD" HIMSELF TO KICK IT OFF! LET'S GO!!
CLIK
COME FLY WITH ME LET'S FLY LET'S FLY AWAY
...ONCE I GET YOU UP THERE WHERE THE AIR IS RARIFIED...
SNAP
SNAP SNAP
... PERFECT FOR A HONEYMOON THEY SAY COME FLY...
YOU'LL HAVE TO STOP IT EVENTUALLY.. THE KIDS ARE GETTING DIZZY...
WAIT! HERE COMES THE SOLO!
E-Mail: benolvr@total.net
DANIEL SHELTON

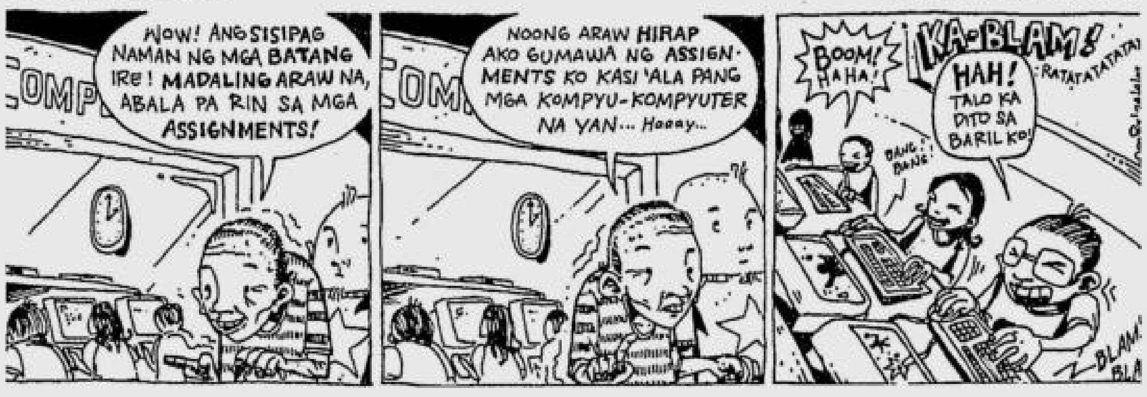
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


...MY...
...HOME...
CALL A COP.
4.24

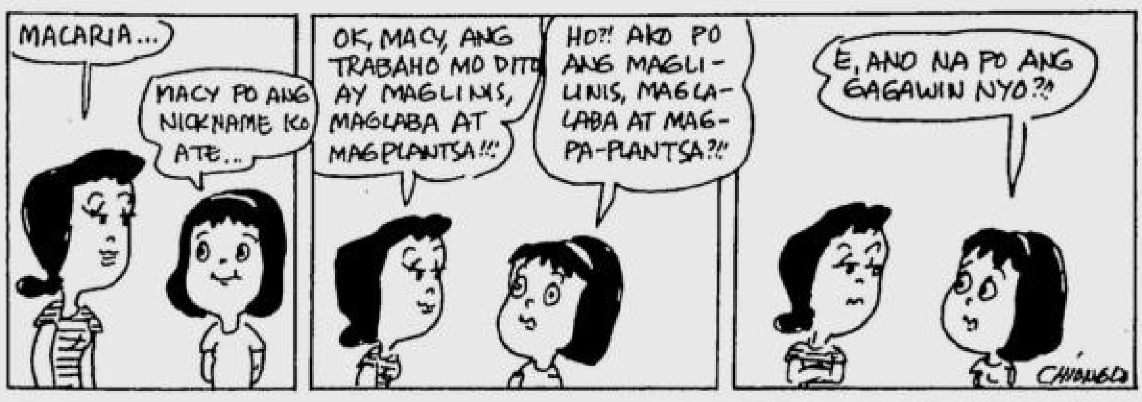
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


WOW! ANG SISIPAG NAMAN NG MGA BATANG IRE! MADALING ARAW NA, ABALA PA RIN SA MGA ASSIGNMENTS!
NOONG ARAW HIRAP AKO GUMAWA NG ASSIGNMENTS KO KASI 'ALA PANG MGA KOMPYU-KOMPYUTER NA YAN... Haaay...
BOOM! HAHA!
KA-BLAM!
RATATATATATA
HAH! TALO KA DITO SA BARIL KO!
BANG! BANG!
BLAM!

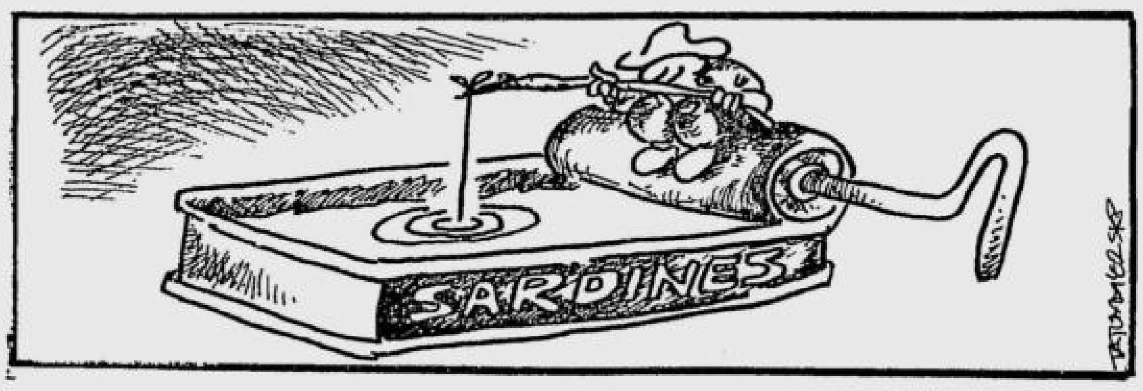
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MACARIA...
MACY PO ANG NICKNAME KO ATE...
OK, MACY, ANG TRABAHO MO DITO AY MAGLINIS, MAGLABA AT MAGPLANTSA!!!
HO?! AKO PO ANG MAGLILINIS, MAGLALABA AT MAGPA-PLANTSA?!!
E, ANO NA PO ANG GAGAWIN NYO?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Cause-oriented films that we adore

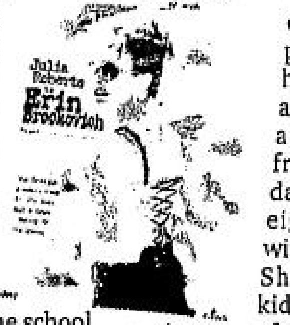
By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

MOVIES make us laugh, cry and scream. They have been instrumental in raising awareness, opening our eyes, challenging viewpoints, provoking action and bringing about change. Whether it's violence or sexual abuse some flicks are ranting about, let's all give them five buckets of salted popcorn for doing something about such causes.

MIRAMAX COLLECTOR'S SERIES
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR MICHAEL CAINE
BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY JOHN IRVING
THE CIDER HOUSE RULES

"BATA, BATA PAANO KA GINAWA?"

Lualhati Bautista's novel-turned-movie overflows with feministic concerns, which are experienced by its protagonist, Lea Bustamante, played by Vilma Santos. She still loves the father of her firstborn who unsuccessfully tried to convince her to stop working, and is now happy with another woman. Together with the kids, she's stuck with her second child's father, a mama's boy who doesn't want to marry her. Her two children have different surnames, which bothers the school principal who thinks that Bustamante is promiscuous. She doesn't have time for the kids because of her demanding NGO work, which deals with feminism and human rights. Constantly fighting for causes she passionately believes in, Bustamante shows how tough it is to be a woman.



"AZUCENA"

In Azucena, an unlikely friendship blossoms between dog butcher Teban and teen pooch lover Lily. As their relationship deepens, Teban understands Lily's attitude and discovers her chaotic home life: how Tomas beats his wife Sonia and sexually abuses Lily. This leads to a violent confrontation and a supposedly unexpected conclusion. In a festival screening abroad, animal rights activists walked out during "Azucena's" showing. But the messages on violence, sexual and animal abuse, the most rampant problems in our society, are clearly shown.

"ERIN BROKOVICH"

Pretty woman Julia Roberts stars as Erin Brockovich in this true story. A flick about a single mother of three, Erin desperately looks for a job and ends up working for a small-time lawyer whom she has earlier hired to pursue her claims in an auto accident. Erin later proves that she's hardworking and efficient when she passionately gets involved in a class suit. A community files a complaint against the power company that has been polluting the town's water, and which has caused diseases among its inhabitants. "Erin Brockovich" is yet another American success story. It's too focused and almost boring, yet it does get its message across: the effects of pollution and that having big boobs doesn't necessarily mean having no brains.

"LORETA"

Ruffa Gutierrez is Loreta, the punching bag of her husband portrayed by Gabby Concepcion, a cheating bastard who even allowed his friend to rape her. Inspired by the story of Lorena Bobbit, "Loreta" is about taking no s--t from anybody, least of all a husband who's supposed to be your protector.

"MILA"

Maricel Soriano is Mila, a public school teacher who goes on strike together with her fellow underpaid teachers. When their aspirations are not fulfilled and she gets fed up with her drug addict-boyfriend, she ends up on the sidewalks of Ermita selling stuff. It is here where she encounters different people whom she helps one way or another. She stops a prostitute mother from selling her daughter to a foreigner. She bonds with the local loony. She teaches street kids. "Mila" is like a series of "Maalaala Mo Kaya" episodes made into a two-hour movie. With lots of characters and subplots, it tackles unemployment, drug addiction, prostitution and corruption.

"THE CIDER HOUSE RULES"

Spidey Tobey Maguire is Homer Wells, adopted by Wilbur Larch, an old doctor who performs abortion and is grooming the young Wells to take over his institution despite the lad's stance on abortion. Exploring life outside the institution, he stumbles onto new experiences and falls in love with lonely Candy, wife of Wally, a soldier assigned in the battlefield. While living a secluded life, Wells gets trapped in an incestuous situation, which challenges his stand on abortion. A thought-provoking film, "The Cider House Rules" is a visual treat featuring the beautiful faces of Maguire, Charlize Theron, Paul Rudd and Erykah Badu.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

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•(3") 7.62 cm length
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2BU! SURVEY

If you were to put up a foundation, what would be your cause?

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

I'd set up a foundation to send deserving public school kids to study abroad.—**Nick Ng, 18, University of the Philippines**

I'd put up a foundation for kids like the Make-a-Wish Foundation wherein sick kids get to have their wishes come true.—**Chiara, 18, Ateneo de Manila University**

Evil warlord foundation: conquering the world one step at a time.—**Eilu, 18, University of Santo Tomas**

My foundation would be for the advancement and development of the agricultural sector because most of our country's problems (poverty, inequality, etc.) are rooted in the land.—**Trina, 20, UP**

I want to put up a soup kitchen.—**Cecille, 17, Immaculate Conception Academy**

I'd put up a free clinic so that even the poor can be given medical attention.—**Odelia, 18, UP**

[I'd put up] a hospital for kids, *pero* not the type that would treat sickness but *'yung* for kids with low self-esteem; *parang* psychiatric type.—**Kat, 19, AdMU**

I would rather make an NGO that would consolidate other NGOs.—**Martin Ngo, 18**

I would put up a foundation for the youth that would help them in terms of education, e.g. scholarships.—**Fritzi, 17**

I would teach special or handicapped kids how not to be dependent on their parents.—**Andrea Go, 17**

My foundation would be for the benefit of abused women and children.—**Barbie, 18**

A foundation for volunteer teachers who go to far-flung areas to teach kids and illiterate Filipinos. The money raised will be distributed to them as some sort of allowance.—**Charlet, 24**

An anti-complacency cause.—**Anna, 18, UP**

A foundation for the mentally ill of Tacloban (my province) and for the forever-broke people.—**Aia, 17**

Given the chance and abundant resources, I'd like to put up a foundation for all the talented musicians—both young and old—who cannot afford to pay for proper training. I love wonderful music and it would be fulfilling for me and the rest of the foundation members.—**Rainalyn, 18**

I'd want a foundation for the education of the youth.—**Sarah, 19**

[I'd put up a foundation for] charity.—**Fen Yu Chang, 17**

If only I could, I'd set up an organization devoted to hunting down corrupt officials who choose to hoard money that should be allocated for the people's education and other needs. Then again, I wonder how many will be left.—**Janet, 20**

A foundation for battered or abused women and children.—**Jem Perez, 18, UP**

[For] street children and abused children. *Pati na rin 'yung mga may sakit na bata na mahihirap. Parang* Bantay Bata.—**Hannah Alcantara, 17**

For people in the streets, in Manila or all-around cause. First of all, these people need help because they're always begging in the streets. People like us who are able to help should give to those people, and helping them raise money is a wonderful idea. Also, a program for people on drugs.—**Vera Devriendt, 19, Chanel model mission finalist**

For the kids out in the streets. I have this thing for kids and I think they need the right education, home and family.—**Mica Lagdameo, 16, Chanel model mission finalist**

A foundation on drug awareness because a lot of people are scared of it and they don't know a lot about it.—**Lisa Rossiter, 18, Chanel model mission finalist**

Education for kids because if you're not educated early, you wouldn't know and nothing will happen. And if I could, a foundation dedicated to the environment.—**Karen Pamintuan, 15, Chanel model mission winner**

For the sick and homeless especially those people with cancer.—**Justine Revola, 18**

SOUTH AFRICA: WILD AND FREE!
Join the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience!

If you are a 15-18 year old Filipino student starving to join a wild, adventure-filled crusade to help Mother Earth, look no further than the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience. If chosen, you'll go on an all-expense paid trip to Johannesburg, South Africa from July 21-31, 2002! The 9-day program will expose you to the beauty of the African wilderness and teach you about man's impact on ecology. You'll also get to act as an "ambassador" for the Philippines and make friends with young people from other countries and cultures very different from your own.

Can't wait to join? Then write a 400-word English essay on an environmental topic that interests you, giving your personal opinion on the issue and possible solutions to the problem. Send it with the completed application form below, a detailed resumé and a copy of your valid passport on or before May 25, 2002. You could soon be on your way to the wilderness of South Africa and helping the planet! Visit our website @ www.cathaypacific.com/ph

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APPLICATION FORM
CATHAY PACIFIC

ATTACH PHOTO

Date

I hereby apply for participation of my child in the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience from July 21-31, 2001

SIGNED ____ (parent / guardian)
CHILD'S NAME ____
SCHOOL ____
DATE OF BIRTH ____
SEX ____ AGE ____ PLACE OF BIRTH ____
NATIONALITY ____
MAILING ADDRESS ____
ZIP CODE ____ TELEPHONE (office) ____ FAX ____
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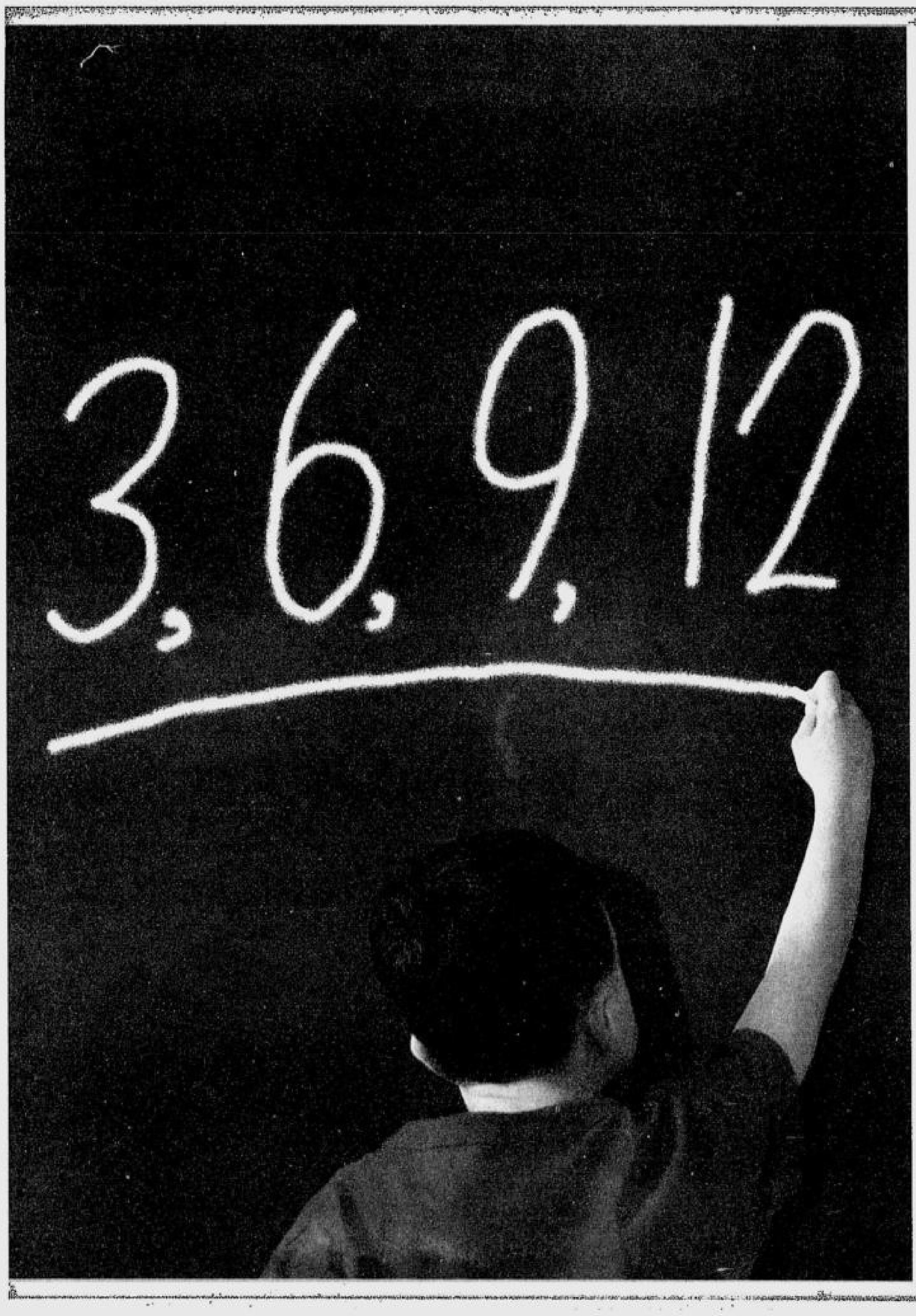

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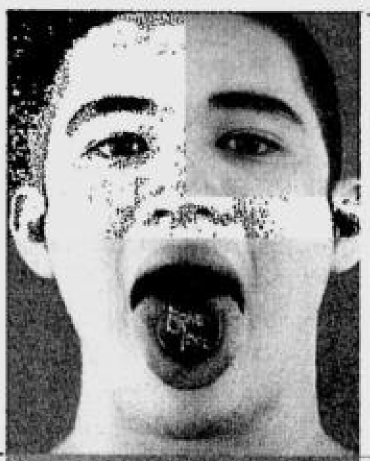


'Don't be afraid to show who you are . . . that's what makes you really unique as a person'

JAN: Crazy and unpredictable

New image models still able to enjoy their fishball

By **Jason Doplito**
2bU! Correspondent

YOU may want to try eating more fishballs if you want to meet a good-looking dude or a sexy babe. At least two such beings are likely to be found enjoying that crisp, delicious fried street food under one of those makeshift stalls. Like fishballs that come in sweet or sour sauce and other fun flavors, you can expect to find these people dressed in funky and different styles.

But 2bU! sat down with these fishball fanatics, Anonymous' latest personalities, Jan la Ó and Ayen Santos, far from a fishball stand. The two, together with Yciar Ledesma and Justin Ventura, won in the store's model search in February. When reminded of the contest, they giggled as they recalled how terrified they were during the finals. Not surprising as they had to face more than a dozen judges, all well-known personalities in the entertainment and fashion industries, for interviews.

"We were asked to (come up with) a green joke on the spot, or walk on stage—basically do things instantly," explains Jan, a 22-year-old multimedia arts student at the College of Saint Benilde.

"Imagine holding a mike, being under the spotlight, (with) people judging you. It's hard!," he says.

The nature of the search made Ayen feel like she was in a pageant.

"My agent practically had to push me into joining. I'm not really into beauty contests at all, that's why," says the 21-year-old former interior designer.

"We really wanted fun, free-spirited individuals," Kat Avanceña of Anonymous said. "They're not models in the sense that we tell people to be like them. In fact, anyone can be like them. You don't have to be a celebrity in order to be popular."

Dressed in casual shirt and jeans, the Anonymous image models do make you feel comfortable. In fact, Ayen is willing to share almost everything (even those we couldn't write here)—from a year-long stay in New York to what her ideal boyfriend is. Jao and Ayen said they would rather hang out on the beach and commune with nature instead of drowning in alcohol at parties.

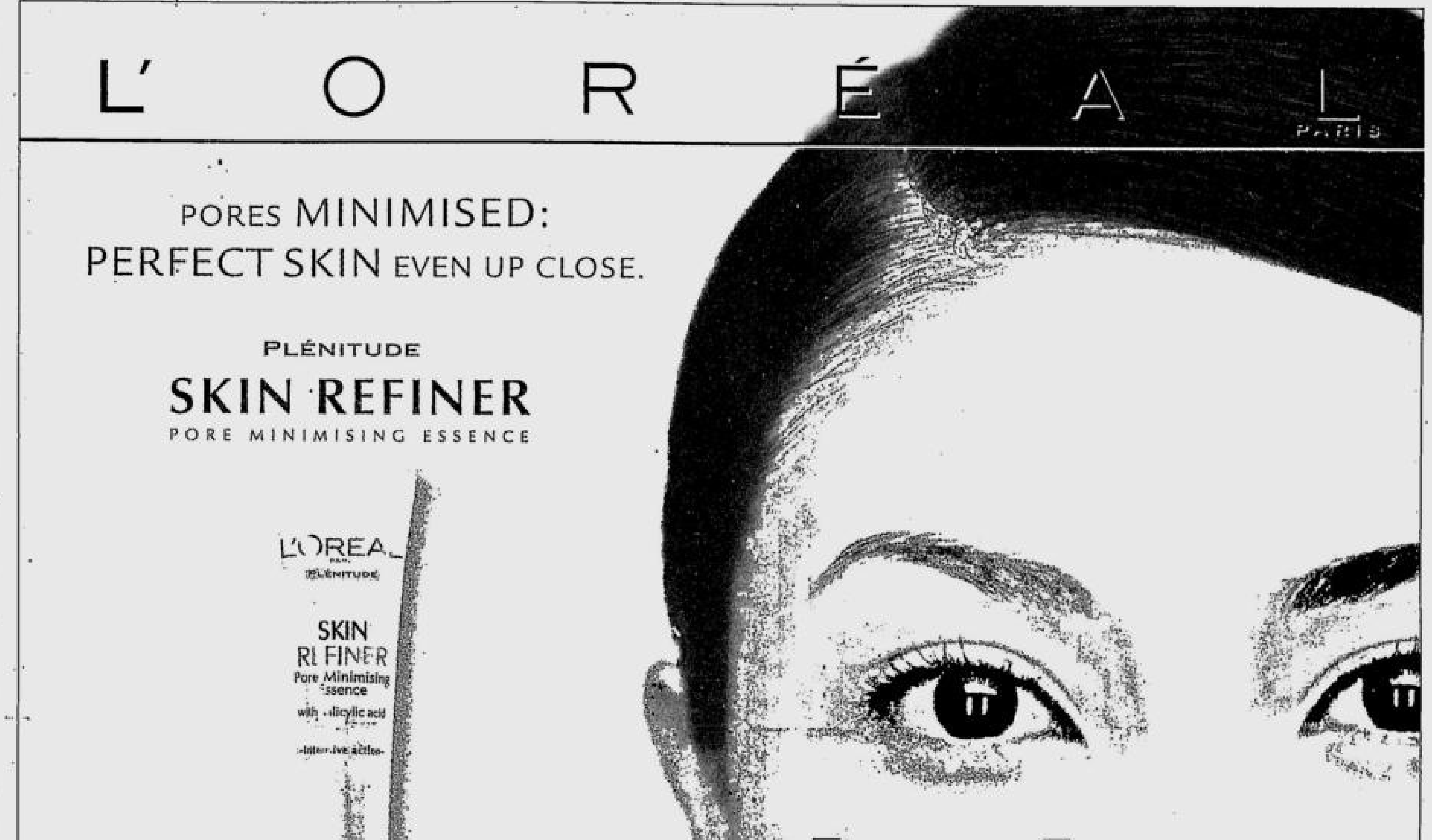
Are you really models?

Ayen: I started modeling less than a year ago. I was doing print ads, no commercials.

Jan: I consider Anonymous as my first (modeling job). I did small fashion shows last October when I arrived, but this is the biggest break for me so far.

What were you doing before you be-

NEW/ p.E2



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Asian Spirit
THE PEOPLE'S AIRLINE

New image models still able to enjoy their fishball

From page E1

came models? Jan, you came from where?

J: Hawaii. I studied there for two-and-a- half years. Before that, I was in Michigan for one year. Before that, Canada for one year, then before that Bacolod. I grew up there (Bacolod) although I was born in Manila.

A: I quit my job in an interior design store. I didn't like my boss.

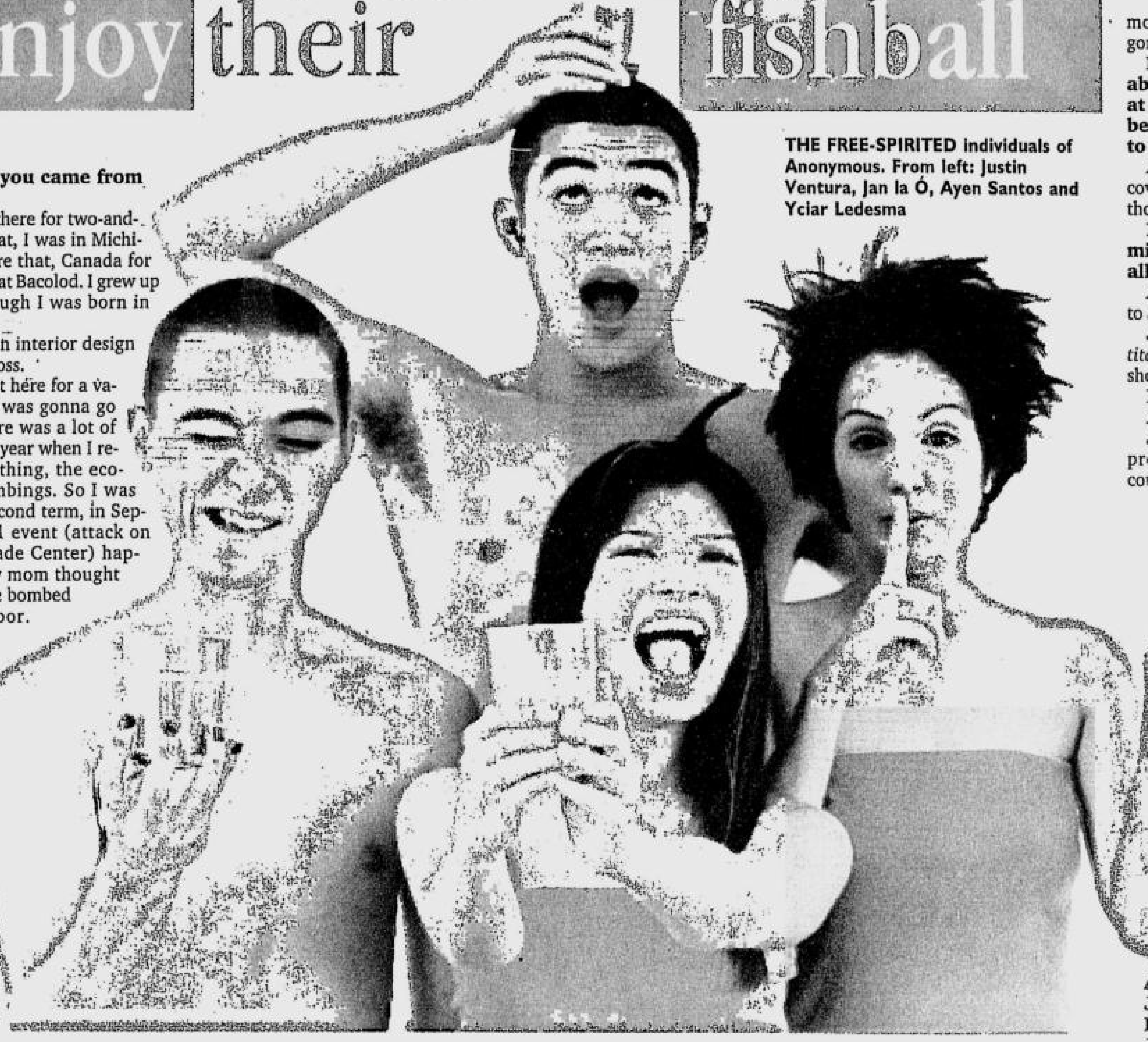
J: Actually, I was just here for a vacation, thinking that I was gonna go back (to Hawaii). There was a lot of stuff going on here last year when I returned, like the Erap thing, the economic slump, the bombings. So I was thinking I'd go back second term, in September. Then the 9-11 event (attack on New York's World Trade Center) happened, so *wala na*. My mom thought Hawaii was going to be bombed again like Pearl Harbor. (Laughter)

What did you study?

J: I took up Biology in Michigan for one year, and I had my subjects credited when I transferred to Hawaii, where I took up Marine Science for two-and-a-half years.

You must be really into the sciences.

J: Actually, no. (Laughs) I just love the beach. If I had a fun benefit, I always do it for kids or nature. My mom is a part of a forest preservation organization in Negros, so that's where I got my love for nature.



THE FREE-SPIRITED individuals of Anonymous. From left: Justin Ventura, Jan la Ó, Ayen Santos and Yciar Ledesma

What made you audition for the Anonymous search?

A: I had an agent who pushed me to join.

Pushed you? Why, you didn't want to join?

A: I wasn't really into pageants *kasi*. I thought of the search as a pageant, something like that. But it was fun, we had a good time.

J: At first, I also didn't want to join, then my friends coaxed me into doing it. So try *lang*. I was just starting out in the business anyway.

What was the search like?

J: Scary.

A: I almost had a heart attack. There were thousands of other applicants and they had to interview us one by one and I was just terrible.

J: And onstage, you had to hold the mike and everything. We were all freaking out.

Did you join a contest before?

A and J: No, first time.

How would you describe each other during the search?

J: (Laughter) Frantic.

A: Crazy. He was just really giddy. We both were actually. That's why we clicked *siguro*, we both like the same things, we even came from the same place before the contest.

J: Yeah... During the contest we were both frantic. We were quiet, then after that we were shaking...

A: We almost died after the search...

How did you find out you won?

A: I got a call and they told me about it. I knew I was gonna win anyway. (Laughter) No, I was just kidding.

What do you think made you win?

J: I guess we're both different.

A: Well, he was bald, I had bangs. (Laughs)

J: We're go-getters in life.

A: We're tickled by everything. Everything excites us.

Were you ever stereotyped before since you guys are very good-looking?

A: I had curly hair before and I was so dark so I wasn't really good-looking. I was known as the shy and quiet one.

J: Me, I was shy and insane. Actually, until now.

Are you prepared to be stereotyped as models? Are you comfortable with that?

A: Not really. We're still getting used to this I guess.

J: (Laughs) I don't know. I don't really see myself as a model, 'cause I'm short. (Laughs)

A: I'm not really used to having people call me a model. I haven't really done anything big in the modeling business. This is just the beginning.

What do you guys plan to do?

A: I don't really plan. I don't even have an organizer or a palm pilot. I just wanna take things one at a time. I didn't plan this Anonymous thing, it just happened. So I'm just gonna wait and see what happens next.

In "Zoolander," the lead star talks about seeing his reflection in a spoon at a cafeteria and realizing he should be a model. When did realization come to you?

A: (Laughter) God, I don't know. I was discovered in a mall by my agent while shopping, though.

Nothing like seeing your face in the mirror and exclaiming, "Wow, I actually look good!"?

A: (Laughter) Ah, no... *baka s'ya.* (pointing to Jan)

J: (Laughs) Well, the usual *lang*. Like my *titas* and *lolas* always tell me I should be in show business. *Ganon lang.*

Music... what do you guys listen to?

A: Alternative.

J: Alternative, acoustic, reggae, trance... pretty much everything except hardcore country, hardcore classical, hardcore Broadway... Britney Spears? (Laughs)

What do you hate about being celebrities?

A: Are we? I think I like everything about it.

J: *Minsan nakakahiya.* You get teased.

If you guys were shy, how did you go up onstage and get crazy?

J: (Laughs) It just comes...

A: You have to drink... (Laughter) No, for me I pray a lot... and then I drink. (Laughs)

J: Yeah, we pray.

What image would you want to project?

A: Like the Guess? model... (Laughs)

What is that, sexy?

A: Yeah, sexy. Sweet but sexy.

J: Me, fun *lang*.

In general, what's your goal in life?

J: Be happy. (Laughter)

A: *Sa iba 'yun ha?*

J: Ah, sorry, sorry... edit, edit... I want rice! (referring to Kitchen, a restaurant owned by the same people who own Anonymous). Seriously, do everything. Suck the marrow out of life.

Would you ever pose nude for Anonymous?

A: I don't think Anonymous will make us do that...

J: At least not yet. (Laughter)

A: If the price is right...

J: I'll think about it... (Laughs)

What word best describes you?

A: Free. I just do what I want to do, without hurting anyone. That's basically free for me. In a way, I consider myself independent. Although I still live with my parents, I think that emotionally, I am.

J: Unpredictable.

If you were to choose between being anonymous and famous, what would you choose?

A: Anonymous in a not-so-famous way. Geez, I don't know what I'm talking about. We want to be recognized for our work, but not in a way that people... I'm a very private person.

J: Me, in-between. Not too famous. Also in a way still anonymous—to have my privacy.

It's also good to be anonymous. Famous and still be grounded. I don't really want to be a personality.

What would you tell others who want to be Anonymous models like you?

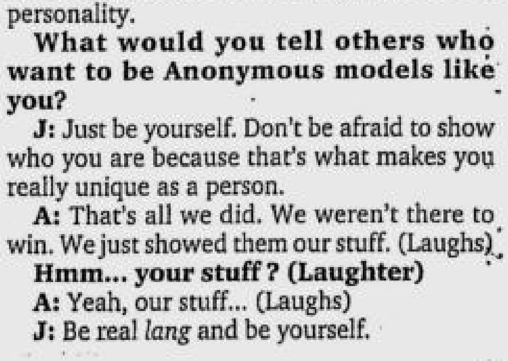
J: Just be yourself. Don't be afraid to show who you are because that's what makes you really unique as a person.

A: That's all we did. We weren't there to win. We just showed them our stuff. (Laughs)

Hmm... your stuff? (Laughter)

A: Yeah, our stuff... (Laughs)

J: Be real *lang* and be yourself.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INQUIRER FRIDAY'S

UP students mold public school kids into better students

By Michelle C. Pino
2bU! Correspondent

LUCKY are those who are studying in a good school—a private school wherein students don't have to squeeze themselves in a classroom. And classes are held in well-lit and well-ventilated rooms.

Majority of the Filipino youth is enrolled in public schools, many of which cannot produce competitive students because of their lack of resources.

But I was lucky to meet young men who found a way to provide what the public school system lacks. This is through Project Forge, a formative and outreach program for university student volunteers and public school children.

Something wrong

Sixty grade five students of San Vicente Public Elementary School were given diagnostic tests, which included Math and English. Only two out of 60 students passed the exams. It was also found out that most of the kids in public schools who are in grade five have an average grade of 75-80 percent in both English and Math. Most of these students are just syllable, word, or sentence readers. Such numbers and realities shocked the young men from Kapuluan Study Center in Diliman but at the same time, moved them to do something.

Help from students

These young men from the University of the Philippines created Project Forge: Forging the Future to address the shortcomings of our country's public school system. And according to Paul Andrew Gorgonio, one of the core members, the key to its success is volunteerism. Young men who are also students of various colleges and year levels voluntarily supervise committees or help as tutors. Every Saturday morning for 12 weeks, they monitor the performance of elementary public school students in their exercise sets.

Helping the helper

There are a number of outreach programs which help those in need. But have you ever heard of a program helping those who provide help? Project Forge is one. It's the project's formative facet that makes it distinct, according to project manager Michael Abundo, a third year ECE student. After every tutorial session, formative talks or discussions are given to university student volunteers. For these young leaders, their work is not only fulfilling but also enhances their personalities, work ethics, viewpoints and study habits. Jason Vallente, a first year Statistics student who acts as tutor and assistant head of the Math committee, believes that what he has learned from the program has made him a better person.

Project Forge is learning how to be generous as you mature and improve yourself and others. The Kapuluan boys hope that they'll be able to improve the project and get enough funding so they can implement the program in other public schools and universities.

E-mail the author at michikookoo@edsamail.com.ph

ONE of the big brothers hard at work

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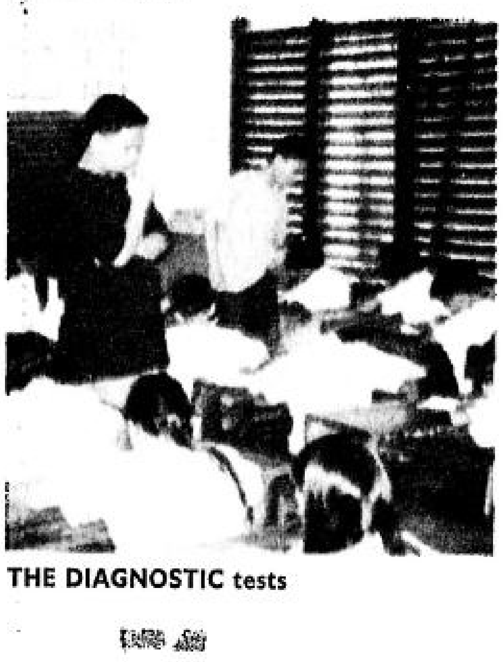
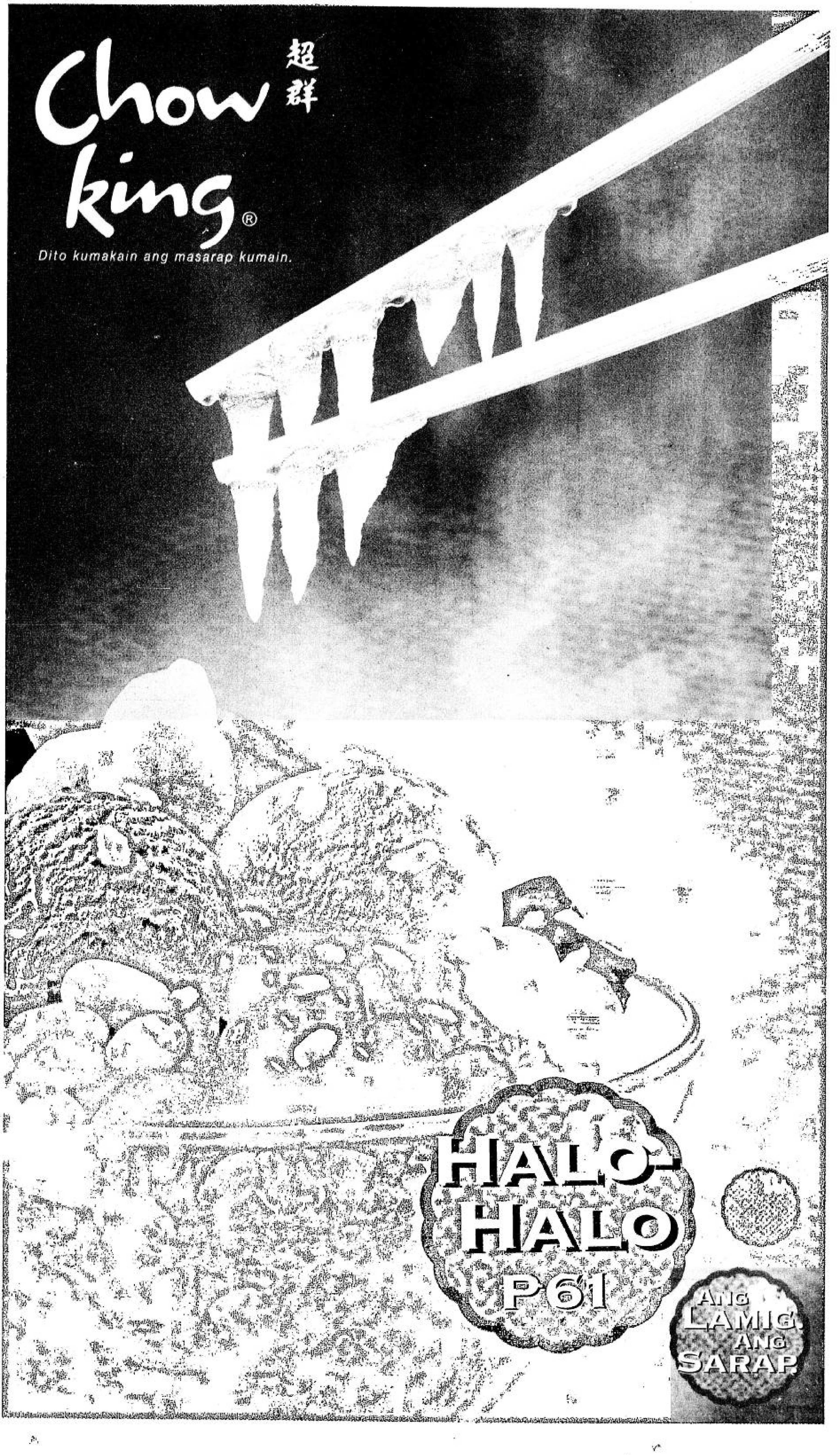


THE DIAGNOSTIC tests



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ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

THIS summer, the couch potato lifestyle is out. Volunteerism is in. Let Hands On Manila show you the way.

When asked why many people have yet to realize the importance of volunteerism, Hands On Manila's executive director Wendy Beltran said, "We become so engrossed with our own problems we forget other people have deeper problems."

If you've always wanted to help but never knew how, Hands On Manila has the answers for you. This nonprofit organization is an affiliate of City Cares in New York, which has been responsible for recruiting, educating and coordinating a network of volunteers for diverse community projects.

Hands On Manila makes volunteering simple and convenient. Orientations are regularly held so potential volunteers may learn more about the foundation. Then, you will be asked to fill out a form to indicate which activities you are interested in. You will be given a calendar that lists and elaborates on the different projects that you may participate in in that month.

Anyone can be a volunteer—no special skills required. As long as you're enthusiastic, committed, flexible, patient, aware and caring, you can help. The great thing about Hands On is that there's always something for everyone. Whether you love children or the environment or are concerned about poverty, Hands On would have something for you to do.

Recently, Hands On started a project called Teen Impact that was created to encourage young people to volunteer. High school students from St. Scholastica's College, Manila became the first group of volunteers to participate in the project. They had a Day of Service in Manila Zoo and Museo Pambata. Wendy said, "This is one way of showing young people that they can be role models. Teen Impact would teach them creative approaches to leadership."

Here are some of the projects that Hands On Manila might have in store for you:

If you adore children...

Kythe Book Buddies—You can be a Bedside Book Buddy for children who have cancer. Make the little kids happy by reading to them. Kythe volunteers will have a special orientation before you meet the children.

If you're a good cook...

Holy Family Home for Girls-Cooks to Go—Teach young women how to cook and bake. Make mouth-watering concoctions and then sit down with them and enjoy what you have prepared.

If you think you'd be a good teacher...

Shine Program—Help instill the importance of good grooming, social skills and sports in the hearts and minds of young girls, and encourage them to develop a healthy self-image by volunteering for this self-enhancement program.

Rotary Center—Tutor underprivileged children so they can keep up with their schoolwork. You may teach them individually or in groups. Volunteers are also needed to help during feeding time.

If you're an artist...

KBF-Art Pals—Share your talent with preschool children and help them produce artworks and crafts that they can give to their parents or display on bulletin boards.

If you love books...

Museo Pambata Resource Center Book Brigade—Thousands of books are donated to the Museo Pambata Resource Center regularly, and these books are read by kids who visit Museo or their Mobile Library. The books need to be sorted out to keep the Resource Center in order. Good news—you may read while sorting.

If you like the outdoors...

Camp Explore-Junior Camp Exploration—Have a blast at a summer camp with kids from 8-13. You may keep an eye on the youngsters, assist camp counselors or help out with the activities. Prior to the camp, volunteers are required to attend a special orientation.

If you're an early bird...

Childhope-The Breakfast Club—Here's another reason to get up early. This is your chance to share breakfast with street children, orphans or kids in shelters. After eating, enjoy the sunshine as you play games with the kids.

If you're a friend to animals...

My Zu-Cleanup Brigade—If the last time you visited Manila Zoo was in first grade, it's about time you returned. Get a chance to get close to the animals as you help clean the zoo. This is also a good hands-on opportunity to learn about biodiversity and conservation.

If you're an environmentalist or would like to be one...

Winner Foundation-Arroceros Forest Park Clean-up Team—Enhance the beauty of the Arroceros Forest Park by helping pick up plastic, segregate trash, cut dried leaves, remove vines or clear a pathway to the forest.

Another way

Volunteerism is not the only way you can help. Hands On Manila also offers an option called Sponsor a Day of Service. If you've been wanting to give a meaningful gift to a loved one, you may contribute money and a card will be sent to your honoree on your behalf to let her/him know about the work being done by the volunteers on the day you sponsored.

Why should you volunteer? To help others, to make people happy, to make a difference, to nourish your soul. But above all this, the answer is simple—because volunteering feels damn good. **_Pam Pastor_**

Volunteers and nonprofit organizations may contact Hands On Manila at 10 Lower Penthouse, Medical Plaza Building, Amorsolo corner Dela Rosa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Call (+632) 843-7044 or e-mail handsonmld@pinoymail.com

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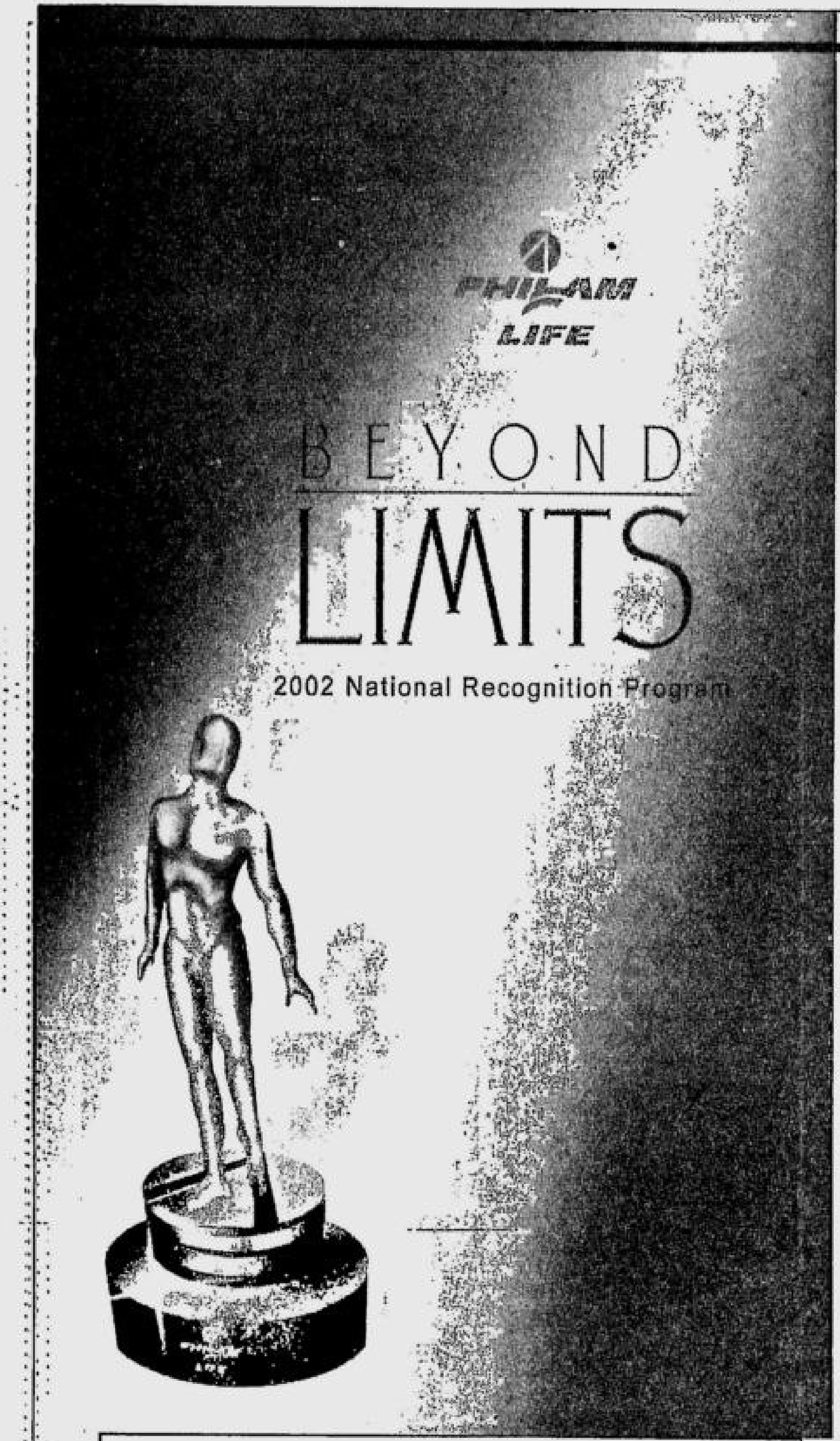


Every insurance company realizes that the most precious resource it has is its people. The confidence of its policyholders and investors takes root in the ability of its people to honor their obligations and commit to their promise.

I laud Philamlife and its management for recognizing the persevering men and women who have inexhaustibly worked to stand behind the promise.

The Insurance Commission joins me in congratulating Philamlife's outstanding sales agents for 2001. May you continue to serve as beacons for those who aspire to become part of the insurance industry.

The worldwide effect of the September 11 attack continue to assault our battered economy but I am confident that with your ceaseless efforts and unwavering dedication to a very noble cause, you shall help spur economic growth for our country as well as improve the lives of your fellow country men.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Eduardo T. Malinis
Insurance Commissioner

I want to extend my personal congratulations to those of you who are being honored in this year's National Recognition Program. You should be very proud of your achievement.

This honor for outstanding production in 2001 is a testament to the hard work, dedication and talent that make Philamlife and its agents industry leaders. You all exemplify the high professional standards that Philamlife and AIG people around the world set for themselves and their organization.

There is nothing more important to Philamlife's success than its 55-year record of providing outstanding products and services that enable its customers build better lives for their families. This, combined with Philamlife's long tradition of helping to improve the local communities in which it operates, distinguishes Philamlife from other business organizations in the Philippines and exemplifies its high standard and unwavering commitment to the nation and its future.

On behalf of Philamlife, and AIG, I would like to thank and congratulate everyone for the contribution that this honor recognizes. Also, as the Philamlife agency force rallies to go "Beyond Limits" in 2002 and set another record as industry leaders, I would like to offer encouragement that you may achieve even greater success in the months to come.

Maurice R. Greenberg
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
American International Group, Inc. (AIG)
Chairman of the Board
Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company

My warmest greetings to all of you!

Your hard work, perseverance, and determination in selling life insurance have now borne fruit. In this year's National Recognition Program, we recognize outstanding members of Philamlife's Agency force who have manifested excellence, and have accomplished remarkable sales performance in Year 2001. You now belong to an elite class of superior performers: Superior performers who continue to lead Philamlife into market leadership.

With the growing complexity of our clients' financial needs and the stiffening competition in the life insurance industry, we in Philamlife, are faced with greater challenges and opportunities. The company would have to embark on new strategies and solutions to continuously achieve its thrust of growth and leadership. In this light, we encourage you, our top agents and agency leaders, to be the forefront runners in providing diversified and comprehensive financial packages to our clients. What makes you stand out as top performers, is your ability to rise above the challenging situations and circumstances, with a sense of commitment, dedication and passion. Your continued professional growth and development distinguishes you among the others. Your history of making and breaking unimaginable sales records gives us faith in your excellence as life insurance underwriters.

On behalf of the Philamlife family, I would like to congratulate you, our National Honor Club awardees, for your excellence. May this celebration inspire you to pursue greater heights and continue soaring high.

God bless and Congratulations!

JOSE L. CUISIA, JR.
President & Chief Executive Officer
Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company

Associates of the Year

Philamlife proudly hails its three most outstanding associates for 2001.

They led the entire agency force with their inspiring and unmatched sales performance thereby standing TALLEST among all their peers. They are prime examples of success and achievement.

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
NUMBER 1 CAREER AGENT
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

MA. ZENAIDA N. ANTONIO
NUMBER 1 UNIT MANAGER
Antonio Associates

JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO
NUMBER 1 AGENCY MANAGER
Antonio Associates

Agents Who Satisfied the Production Requirements for the 2002 MDRT

The MDRT, founded in 1927, is a forum designed to foster the highest standards of professional approach to selling life insurance and servicing policyholders.

These are the men and women who have a personal commitment... a dedication to excellence.

Without a doubt, the MDRT shines out as the most prestigious association of life insurance professionals worldwide.

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
Life and Qualifying Member - 8 x Top of Table

JOSE DAVID R. TANINGCO*
Court of Table

CORAZON K. ANG
Life and Qualifying Member

RODOLFO M. MALLARI
Life and Qualifying Member

JACINTA Y. PHOA
Life and Qualifying Member

JEANETTE L. MENDOZA
Qualifying Member**

YOLANDA A. MORTEL
Qualifying Member**

MA. ELENA G. ASTURIAS
Qualifying Member

SHIRLEY L. CO
Qualifying Member

LUCILA H. KIERULF
Qualifying Member

FE S. DE DIOS
Qualifying Member

ANTONINA S. SOLOMON
Qualifying Member

LOURDES E. BERNARDO
Qualifying Member

NILDA C. UY
Qualifying Member

ZENAIDA A. PALMES
Qualifying Member

LETICIA G. O. ANG
Qualifying Member

JOSEPHINE C. GIRON
Qualifying Member

LEONIDA F. PAGDONSOLAN
Qualifying Member

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO
Qualifying Member

MA. THERESA E. LUCILA
Qualifying Member

ANUNCIACION C. BIROG
Qualifying Member

NANCY R. BAUTISTA
Qualifying Member

CHAN SIU ENG
Qualifying Member

MA. THERESA L. SOLON
Qualifying Member

CRISPINA M. VILLANUEVA
Qualifying Member

BENITO D. MACANDILI
Qualifying Member

NELIA L. LAUDICO
Qualifying Member

REX MA. A. MENDOZA
Qualifying Member

MYRNA L. OLASO, LUTCF
Qualifying Member

LOURDES V. GLORIA, LUTCF
Qualifying Member

PETRONILA B. SADARAN
Qualifying Member

EMELITA S. ABANTO
Qualifying Member

GLICERIA D. DE LEON
Qualifying Member

MA. EDITHA S. PEÑAFLOR
Qualifying Member

EUSEBIA M. MAGSINO
Qualifying Member

VALERIE U. WONG DE LEON
Qualifying Member

LELI T. CHENG*

LILY T. SY CHUA*

ANISSA U. CHUA*

HENEDINA G. PARAISO*

THERESITAS N. PANOPIO*

JACINTO T. KEH*

MA. FATIMA R. RODRIGUEZ*

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ*

LADY LOVE H. AGBISIT*

MA. CONCEPCION L. VILLARUEL*

BARTOLOME R. CRUZ*

RONALD JORGE S. JIMENEZ*

TOMAS R. ESCAREZ*

GERALDINE MARIE A. LIMPO*

ISABELITA S. CASTOR*

JOHN C. SY*

EDITHA C. CAPISTRANO*

JEANETTE C. FABICO*

MARISSA V. TAGUINOD*

FERNANDO F. PALCON*

SALLY N. KO*

* Candidate for 2002 Qualifying Member

** Candidate Life and Qualifying Member

Year 2001 has been a year of dramatic changes and events. The Edsa Dos Revolution saw the Filipino nation once again assert People Power as we pressed for change and reform. The September 11 tragedy gripped the whole world with fear and helplessness. However, that same event struck our inner desire to reach out any way we could to those severely affected. Indeed, 2001 showcased the triumph of the human spirit. And while these events provided the backdrop for a bleak business environment, there were great men and women who forged ahead. Amidst these uncertainties, there were those who were undaunted by the circumstances. They responded to the formidable challenges and relentlessly pursued their goals and dreams.

Tonight, we proudly hail our outstanding sales performers who despite the odds, journeyed **BEYOND LIMITS** for a truly inspiring production performance.

As we continue to face greater adversities in the future, let us remember to master lessons from the past for after all, it is in tough times that the true spirit and character of achievers are molded and built.

Let your victories therefore in 2001 spur you to even greater heights of achievement as you move **BEYOND LIMITS** in 2002 and in the years ahead!

Josefino R. Sto Domingo, FLMI, LLIF
EVP and Chief Agency Officer

Special Achievement AWARDS

Philamlife's Top Career Agents and Agency Leaders who achieved the honor and distinction of being the Company's most productive sales professionals for Recognition Year 2001.

Career Agent Category

Philamlife's Top Career Agents who achieved the honor and distinction of being the Company's most productive career agents for Recognition Year 2001.

They stand out among a field of more than 5,000 career agents nationwide.

NATIONAL TOP CAREER AGENT

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

MANILA AGENCIES

JOSE DAVID R. TANINGCO
Nicdao Associates
TOP MANILA

SHIRLEY L. CO
Tan Associates
1st RUNNER-UP MANILA

PROVINCIAL AGENCIES

RODOLFO M. MALLARI
Pampanga-Del Rosario Agency
TOP PROVINCIAL

TOMAS R. ESCAREZ
Batangas-Clet Agency
1st RUNNER-UP PROVINCIAL

Unit Manager Category

Philamlife's Top Unit Managers who achieved the honor and distinction of being the Company's most productive unit managers for Recognition Year 2001.

NATIONAL TOP UNIT MANAGER

ZENAIDA N. ANTONIO
Antonio Associates

MANILA AGENCIES

TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE
Tan Associates
TOP MANILA

CHERYL LOURDES N. CLETO
Nicdao Associates
1st RUNNER-UP MANILA

PROVINCIAL AGENCIES

ANTONIO S. LAPADA
Rizal-Maunahan Agency
TOP PROVINCIAL

EMERITA P. CARAO
INV-Mata Agency
1st RUNNER-UP PROVINCIAL

Agency Manager Category

Philamlife's Top Agency Managers who achieved the honor and distinction of being the Company's most productive agency managers for Recognition Year 2001.

NATIONAL TOP AGENCY MANAGER

JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO
Antonio Associates

MANILA AGENCIES

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO
Del Mundo Associates
TOP MANILA

JUAN A. TAN
Tan Associates
1st RUNNER-UP MANILA

PROVINCIAL AGENCIES

PRISCILO E. COMIA
Batangas-Comia Agency
TOP PROVINCIAL

SERAPIO G. MAUNAHAN
Rizal-Maunahan Agency
1st RUNNER-UP PROVINCIAL

PHILAM LIFE

PHILAM LIFE
FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

A five-time member of the Chairman's Board earns the rank and privilege to be elevated to Philamlife's highest honor club.

This club extols the memory of Philamlife's Founder and First President, Earl Caroll. These are the true professionals who represent excellence and commitment.

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

SHIRLEY L. CO
Tan Associates

JEANETTE L. MENDOZA†
Antonio Associates

JACINTA Y. PHOA
Tan Associates

CORAZON K. ANG
Tan Associates

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO
Del Mundo Associates

RODOLFO M. MALLARI
Pampanga-Del Rosario Agency

YOLANDA A. MORTEL
Mortel Associates

ANTONINA S. SOLOMON
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

NILDA C. UY
Del Mundo Associates

MA. ELENA G. ASTURIAS
Del Mundo Associates

NG CHO LIAN
Tan Associates

LUCILA H. KIERULF
Del Mundo Associates

FE S. DE DIOS
Del Mundo Associates

CHAN SIU ENG
Tan Associates

VENECIA C. LIM
Tan Associates

SALUD P. CAPILI
Zambrano Associates

GUEI TAY GI
Tan Associates

EMERITA S. SANTIAGO
Nicdao Associates

PHILAM LIFE
CHAIRMAN'S BOARD

This exclusive honor club, dedicated to Philamlife's Chairman, Maurice R. Greenberg, belongs to the top 15% of Philamlife's outstanding Career Agents.

They are the true pacesetters of the agency force who exemplify growth and strength, characteristics of intensely dedicated men and women.

JOSE DAVID R. TANINGCO
Nicdao Associates

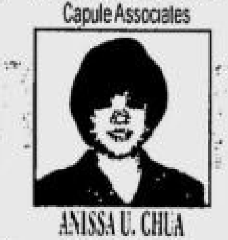
MYRNA L. OLASO, LUTCF
Capule Associates

LELI T. CHENG
Yu Associates

LILY T. SY CHUA
Tanio Associates

MA. THERESA L. SOLON
Del Mundo Associates

LOURDES V. GLORIA
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates


ANISSA U. CHUA
R. Tan Associates

TOMAS R. ESCAREZ
Batangas-Clet Agency

MA. FATIMA R. RODRIGUEZ
Central Luzon Direct

PETRONILA B. SADARAN
Uson Associates

NANCY R. BAUTISTA
Espintu Associates

FERNANDO F. PALCON
Zambrano Associates

LADY LOVE H. AGBISIT
Davao-Hocson Agency

ISABELITA S. CASTOR
Antonio Associates

LETICIA G. O. ANG
Tan Associates

RONALD JORGE S. JIMENEZ
Pagaduan Associates

LOURDES E. BERNARDO
Antonio Associates

ANUNCIACION C. BIROG
Del Mundo Associates

MILAGROS I. GATDULA
Laguna-Falaque Agency

ZENAIDA A. PALMES
Del Mundo Associates

FLORA O. CADIENTE
Ardidon Associates

BARTOLOME R. CRUZ
Pagaduan Associates

JEANETTE C. FABICO
Tan Associates

THERESITAS N. PANOPIO
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

MA. EDITHA S. PENAFLOR
Antonio Associates

ROSITA P. LAO
Tan Associates

PERLITA O. CAHAPAY
Ardidon Associates

VALERIE U. WONG DE LEON
Tan Associates

DAI HIONG SHIN
Tan Associates

JACINTO T. KEH
R. Tan Associates

LEONIDA F. PAGDONSOLAN
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

ELISA M. DOLOR
Batangas-Clet Agency

BENITO D. MACANDILI
Butalon-Zurita Associates

EDITHA C. CAPISTRANO
Antonio Associates

PRESCILLA L. RIVERO
Del Mundo Associates

IMELDA M. OPPUS
Nicdao Associates

EMELITA S. ABANTO
Antonio Associates

MARISSA V. TAGUINOD
INV-Mata Agency

GLICERIA D. DE LEON
Antonio Associates

ESMERALDA S. BELTRAN
Bagui Associates

PHILAM LIFE

the PRESIDENT'S CABINET

In the tradition of excellence, these Agency Managers have distinguished themselves with exceptional First Year Commission Income for Recognition Year 2001.

Agency Category

JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO
Antonio Associates

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO
Del Mundo Associates

JUAN A. TAN
Tan Associates

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

REYNALDO N. MORTEL
Mortel Associates

ERIC EUSEBIO G. NICDAO
Nicdao Associates

CRISA G. NICDAO
Nicdao Associates

PRISCILO E. COMIA
Batangas-Comia Agency

SERAPIO G. MAUNAHAN
Rizal-Maunahan Agency

JOHN P. MATA, JR.
INV-Mata Agency

MELBA L. TAN
Cebu-Tan Agency

FLORANTE R. PINEDA
Tarlac-Pineda Agency

MANUEL Y. USON
Uson Associates

JOSEPH B. RULLA
Baguio-Rulla Agency

AURORA M. MATURINO
Bataan-Maturino Agency

PROCESO G. MENDOZA
Mendoza Associates

DOMINGO B. BONGALA
Bongala Associates

PATRICIA E. BAGUI
Bagui Associates

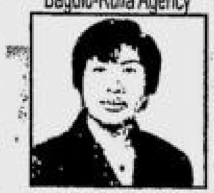
ALFONSO O. JEREZ
Cotabato-Jerez Agency

CECILIA A. MELENDRES
Melendres Associates

ANTONINA A. DEL ROSARIO
Pampanga-Del Rosario Agency

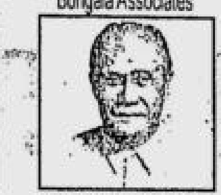
MODESTO T. MEDRANO
Cavite-Medrano Agency

ESTRELLA P. ALTAREJOS
Camarines-Altarejos Agency


NANCY R. BAUTISTA
Espiritu Associates

HENRY M. ESPIRITU
Espiritu Associates

YOLANDA M.L. ALTAVAS
Panay-Altavas Agency


ZOILO S. ZAMBRANO
Zambrano Associates

FERNANDO A. COSTES, JR.
North Luzon-Costes Agency

EPIMACO F. BARUC
Cebu-Baruc Agency

FLORENTINA M. ARDIDON
Ardidon Associates

ROQUE T. H. TAN
R. Tan Associates

FELICISIMO G. CLET
Batangas-Clet Agency

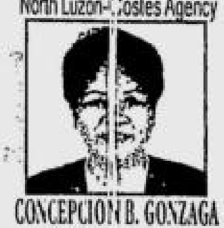
SOLEDAD J. HERRERA
Herrera Associates

FERDINAND P. AQUINO
Pampanga-Aquino Agency

LEONIDA D. ROQUE
L. Roque Associates

RODOLFO A. MANGALIAG
Mangaliag Associates

PABLO O. TAMALA, JR.
Pagadian-Tamala Agency


CONCEPCION B. GONZAGA
Iloilo-Gonzaga Agency

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the PRESIDENT'S CABINET

In the tradition of excellence, these Agency Leaders have distinguished themselves with exceptional First Year Commission Income for Recognition Year 2001.

Direct Unit Category

VERONICA S. GONZALEZ
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

ROSARIO C. SALIENTES
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO
Del Mundo Associates

MA. ZENAIDA N. ANTONIO
Antonio Associates

REYNALDO N. MORTEL
Mortel Associates

JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO
Antonio Associates

CHERYL LOURDES N. CLETO
Nicdao Associates

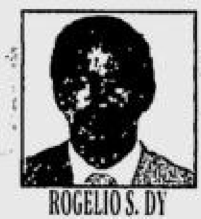
ERIC EUSEBIO G. NICDAO
Nicdao Associates

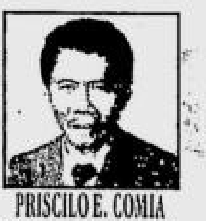
CRISA G. NICDAO
Nicdao Associates

TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE, LUTCF
Tan Associates

FLORANTE R. PINEDA
Tarlac-Pineda Agency

FLORENTINA M. ARDIDON
Ardidon Associates


ROGELIO S. DY
Dy Associates

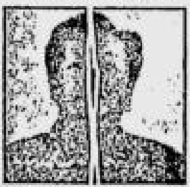

PRISCILO E. COMIA
Batangas-Comia Agency

CORAZON K. ANG
Tan Associates

SEGUNDINA O. TAN
Tan Associates

MANUEL Y. USON
Uson Associates

GINA Z. MENDOZA
Mendoza Associates

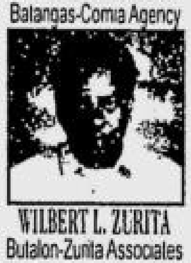

ANTONINA A. DEL ROSARIO
Pampanga-Del Rosario Agency

FELICISIMO G. CLET
Batangas-Clet Agency

ROQUE T. H. TAN
R. Tan Associates

ERWIN JOSEPH MARTIN Y. SAPLALA
Dy Associates

JOSE M. BUTALON
Butalon-Zurita Associates


WILBERT L. ZURITA
Butalon-Zurita Associates

ROBERTO E. MENDOZA
Antonio Associates

LEAH E. PONIO
L. Ponio Associates

EDUARDO A. FORDAN
Antonio Associates

NELIA M. ZABALERIO
Zabalerio Associates

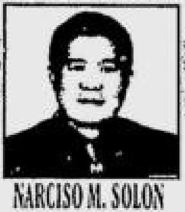
ESTRELLA P. ALTAREJOS
Camarines-Altarejos Agency

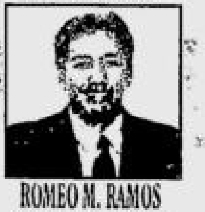
AURORA M. MATURINO
Bataan-Maturino Agency

ALFONSO O. JEREZ
Cotabato-Jerez Agency

ROBERTO A. BERNARDO
Antonio Associates

NELIA L. LAUDICO
Del Mundo Associates


NARCISO M. SOLON
Del Mundo Associates


ROMEO M. RAMOS
Zambrano Associates

SERAPIO G. MAUNAHAN
Rizal-Maunahan Agency

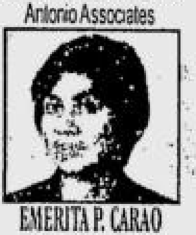
CONSTANCIA S. VERGEL DE DIOS
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

ANTONIO S. LAPADA
Rizal-Maunahan Agency

ANATALIA W. BRIONES
Bagui Associates

ORLANDO T. ABANTO
Antonio Associates

LEONILA A BRITANIA
Bongala Associates


EMERITA P. CARAO
INV-Mata Agency

JOSE J. MENDOZA
INV-Mata Agency

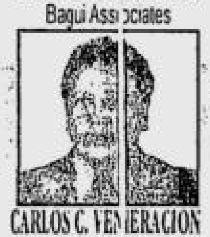
EMILIE M. BOBE
Bacolod-Bobe Agency

FIDEL A. DEMOT
Baguio-Rulla Agency

CARINA G. LU
Tan Associates

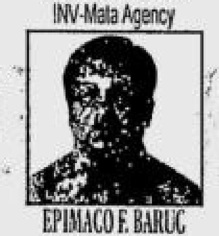
LEORANDO G. CUNANAN
Batangas-Cunanan Agency

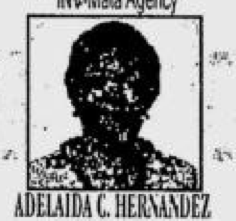
CECILIA A. MELENDRES
Melendres Associates

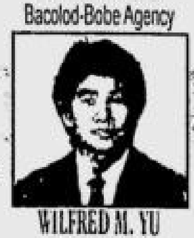

CARLOS C. VENERACION
Pagaduan Associates

LETICIA G. O. ANG
Tan Associates

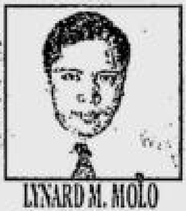
MARIVIC A. DOCULAN
Baguio-Rulla Agency


EPIMACO F. BARUC
Cebu-Baruc Agency


ADELAIDA C. HERNANDEZ
Antonio Associates


WILFRED M. YU
Yu Associates

MYRNA L. OLASO, LUTCF
Capule Associates


LYNARD M. MOLO
Cavite-Vanas Agency

FERNANDO A. COSTES, JR.
North Luzon-Costes Agency

NILDA C. UY
Del Mundo Associates

ROGELIO L. CRISOSTOMO
Antonio Associates

ADORACION P. PENALES
Cebu-Tan Agency

RODOLFO A. MANGALIAG
Mangaliag Associates

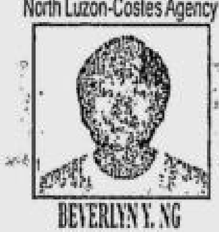
VICENTE G. TAN
Cebu-Tan Agency

PABLO O. TAMALA, JR.
Pagadian-Tamala Agency

LAMBERTO R. AUSTRIA
Mortel Associates

MA. CRISTINA B. MENDOZA
Antonio Associates

ROSEMELIA B. GILO
R. Gilo Associates


BEVERLYN Y. NG
Tan Associates

MODESTO T. MEDRANO
Cavite-Medrano Agency

ISABELA P. CARREON
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

ISMAEL L. MELENDRES, JR.
Melendres Associates

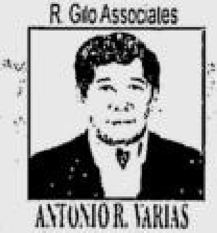
JOSEFINA S. HIPOL
Bagui Associates

BASILISA B. MONTOYA
Nicdao Associates

LAMBERTO A. SALAMATIN
Capule Associates

YOLANDA M.L. ALTAVAS
Panay-Altavas Agency

CONCEPCION B. GONZAGA
Iloilo-Gonzaga Agency


ANTONIO R. VARIAS
Cavite-Vanas Agency

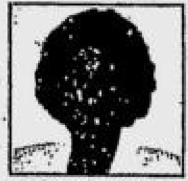
FELIZA B. ASERON
Batangas-Maligalig Agency

JESUS G. ESMA, JR.
Cebu-Tan Agency

MILTON Y. TIAN
Tan Associates

DEBBIE Q. BONDOC
Central Luzon Direct

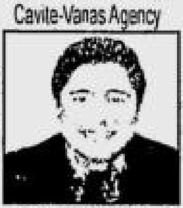
STELLA MARIS L. PUNZAL
Capule Associates


AURORA A. ROMERO
Metro Manila Central Direct

ROMUALDO V. MATURINO
Bulacan-Maturino Agency

LILIA M. BORROMEO
INV-Mata Agency

FELISA S. PINEDA
Tarlac-Pineda Agency


EARL S. BALANKIG
Cebu-Tan Agency

ROSA P. MENDOZA
Surigao-Mendoza Agency

NILDA B. SUMABAT
Sumabat Associates

RICARDO A. DELOS SANTOS
Delos Santos Associates

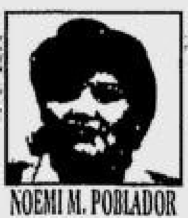
IMELDA C. GANA
Cavite-Vanas Agency

PRESIDENT'S CABINET CONTINUED....

PHILAM LIFE

JAMES WALTER P. CAPILI
Zambrano Associates

FE S. DE DIOS
Del Mundo Associates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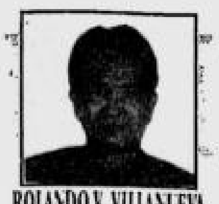
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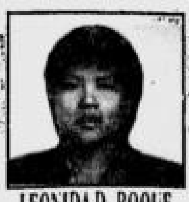
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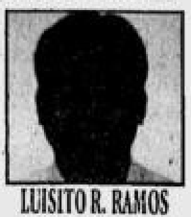
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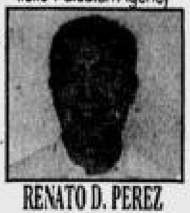
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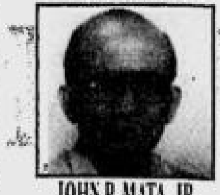
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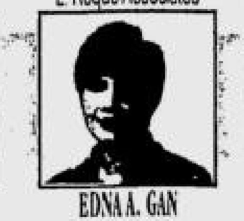
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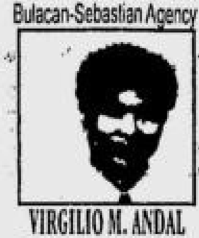
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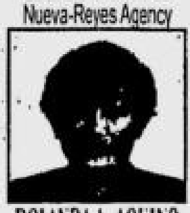
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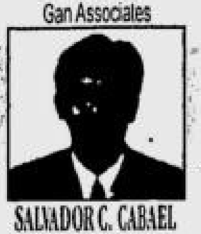
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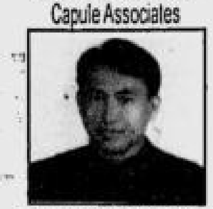
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Davao-Hocson Agency

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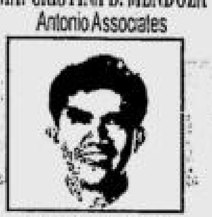
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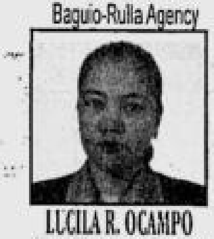
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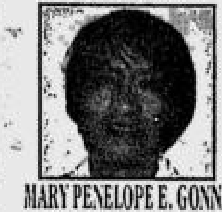
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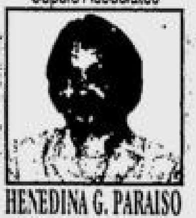
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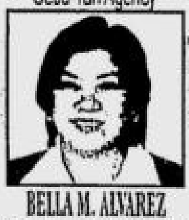
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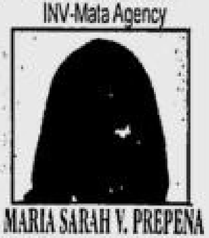
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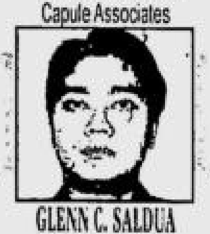
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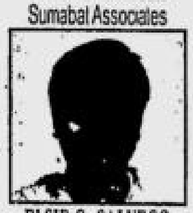
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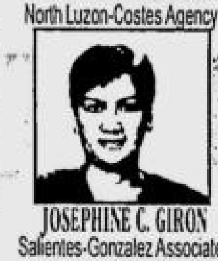
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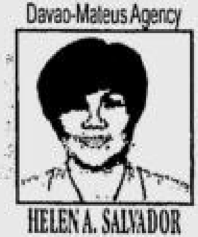
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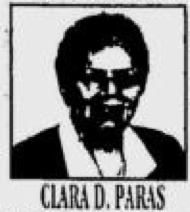
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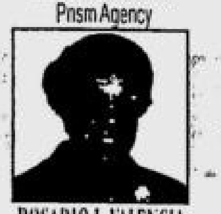
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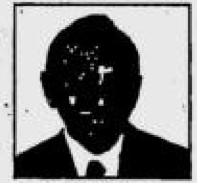
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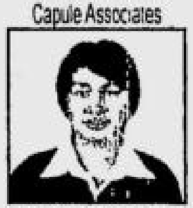
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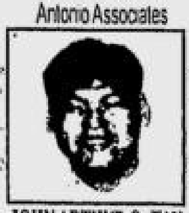
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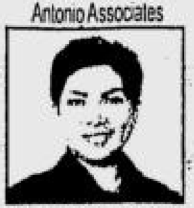
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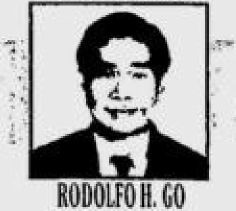
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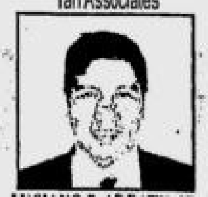
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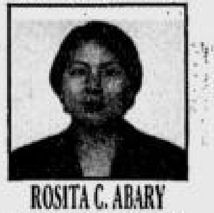
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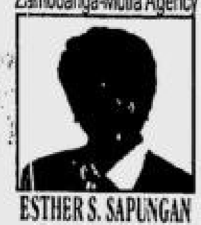
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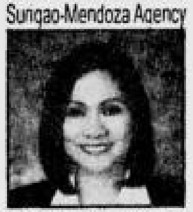
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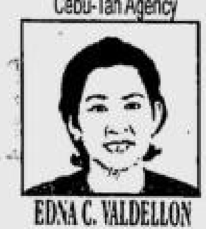
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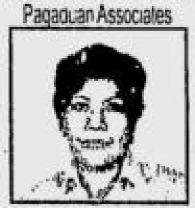
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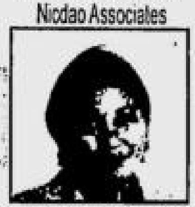
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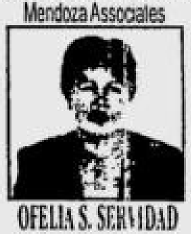
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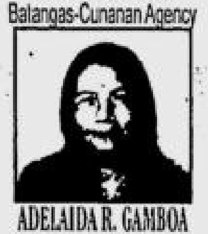
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GENE P. HUFANCIA
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RHODA L. TAN
Tan Associates

ELENIDAD B. GARCIA
Mortel Associates

MA. ROSARIO RUTH E. JUANICO
Cebu-Tan Agency

EDGAR C. BARTOLATA
Del Mundo Associates

VIRGINIA G. DE LEON
L. Roque Associates

ELENA C. SANTOS
Bulacan-Maturino Agency

MILAGROS R. SOREACH
Cebu-Tan Agency

GENEROSO P. ZABALERIO
Zabalerio Associates

ALBERT S. GALIZA, SR.
INV Mata- Agency

RENE B. ALIMBUYUGUEN
Prism Agency

ZENAIDA L. MATIAS
Bongala Associates

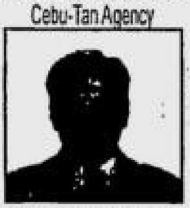
EVANGELINE S. GARCIA
Rizal-Maunahan Agency

MARIAN E. ISLA
Laguna-Falague Agency

FLORANTE A. PANGANIBAN
Batangas-Cunanan Agency

FLORENDA A. JAMORA
Bacolod-Bobe Agency

CEFERINA M. MENDOZA
Batangas-Comia Agency


LORENZO V. SIBAYAN
Cavite-Medrano Agency

GEORGE G. DULDULAO
Ilocos-Abra Agency

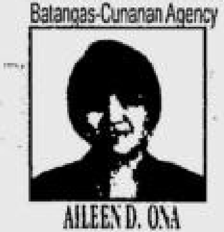
ROBINSON B. MONTOYA
Nicdao Associates

MERLITA PRIMO
Capule Associates

MA. ASUNCION M. LERA
Cebu-Tan Agency

MA. LIZA M. FULLIDO
Del Mundo Associates

LILIA S. REYES
Cavite-Vanas Agency


AILEEN D. ONA
Quezon-Maliwanag Agency

JOSELYN M. SILLA
Iloilo-Palcutan Agency

MA. CONCEPCION L. VILLARUEL
Salientes-Gonzalez Associates

VIVIAN P. ARGUELLES
Nicdao Associates

LINA FLOR S. CUBA
Dy Associates

MICHAEL ANGELO S. REYES
Batangas-Clet Agency

VIOLETA P. QUILAO
Batangas-Comia Agency

MA. ANDREA A. DAWA
Baguio-Rulla Agency

ERIC EUSEBIO G. NICDAO
Nicdao Associates

JASMIN V. BACAYO
Cebu-Baruc Agency

IQA

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The mark of a career underwriter is exemplified by this worldwide symbol of excellence. Membership to this club is measured by persistency --- the number of clients who keep their policies in-force for many years. Persistent business is the seal of a true professional.

NG CHO LIAN
25th Year

JACINTA Y. PHOA
23rd Year

SHIRLEY L. CO
21st Year

CHAN SIU ENG
18th Year

GUEI TAY GI
18th Year

CORAZON K. ANG
16th Year

ESTRELLITA C. TAN
8th Year

VENECIA C. LIM
4th Year

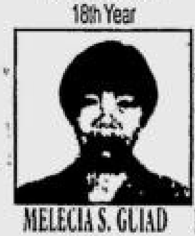
BARTOLOME R. CAMACHO
3rd Year

ROSARIO J. VALENCIA
3rd Year

FLORENTINO G. AWINGAN
3rd Year

LETICIA G. O. ANG
3rd Year

BALBINO J. ALVIAR
2nd Year

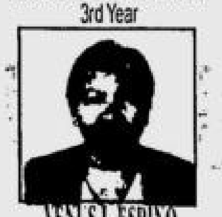

MELECIA S. GUIAD
2nd Year

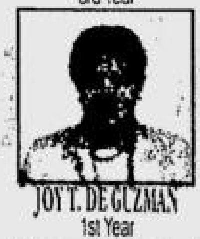
ROMEO AUGUSTO N. MACASAET IV
2nd Year

AMELIA O. HONG
1st Year

ANGELICA L. VILVAR
1st Year

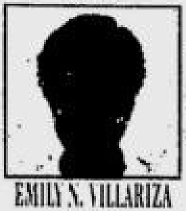
ANGELITA T. MANDANI
1st Year


VENUS J. ESPINO
1st Year

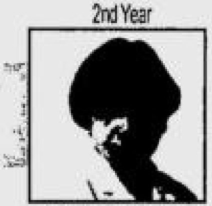

JOY T. DE GUZMAN
1st Year

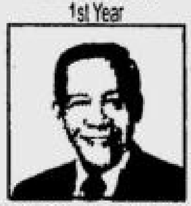
FILOMENA D. BAES
1st Year

ADELAIDA O. SAN MATEO
1st Year

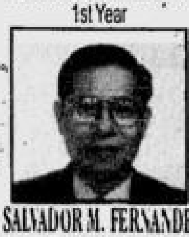

EMILY N. VILLARIZA
1st Year

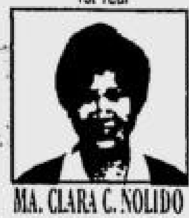
ELSIE L. URBIZTONDO
1st Year


SUSAN M. GAYATIN
1st Year

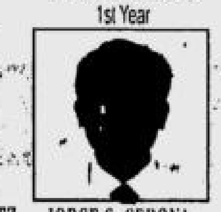

ROMEO M. ENCARNACION
1st Year

GERALDINE MARIE A. LIMPO
1st Year


SALVADOR M. FERNANDEZ
1st Year


MA. CLARA C. NOLIDO
1st Year

MA. TERESA D. HERNANDEZ
1st Year


JORGE G. GERONA
1st Year

EDITHA C. SAPLALA
1st Year

DANDE B. MACARAEG
1st Year

HELEN S. ACEDO
1st Year

BEATRIZ F. ALCAIN
1st Year

PHILAM LIFE

Premier AGENTS CLUB

This elite club recognizes distinguished members for their superior performance in quality business, exceptional first year production and professional agency values.

They stand as vanguards, leading the field in exceptional professionalism --- such is the hallmark of premier agent of the premier Company.

PLATINUM

SHIRLEY L. CO*

JACINTA Y. PHOA*

CORAZON K. ANG*

LOURDES V. GLORIA

LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO

NILDA C. UY

MA. ELENA G. ASTURIAS

JEANETTE L. MENDOZA†

JOSE DAVID R. TANINGCO

YOLANDA A. MORTEL

*3 year consecutive

GOLD

CHAN SIU ENG

NELIA L LAUDICO

LETICIA G. O. ANG

NG CHO LIAN

ANUNCIACION C. BIROG

NANCY R. BAUTISTA

MA. THERESA L. SOLON

PETRONILA B. SADARAN

MA. EDITHA S. PENAFLOR

BENJAMIN Y. GAN

MA. THERESA E. LUCILA

ANGEL M. BAYLON

MYRNA L. OLASO

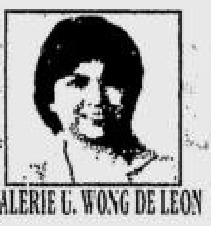
LOURDES E. BERNARDO

ANTONINA S. SOLOMON

FLORENTINA M. ARDIDON

PRESCILLA L. RIVERO

ISABELITA S. CASTOR


VALERIE U. WONG DE LEON

FE S. DE DIOS

JACINTO T. KEH

GERALDINE MARIE A. LIMPO

LUCILA H. KIERULF

SILVER

MA. LETICIA G. ALLADO

VENECIA C. LIM

METHODIO V. MAGNAYE

SYLVIA O. GAGTO

FELICIDAD B. DINLASAN

CLARA D. PARAS

MARIO A. DE GUZMAN

MA. LOURDES L. RIVERA

RODOLFO M. MALLARI

LUCILA R. OCAMPO

THELMA G. SANTOS

BELLA M. ALVAREZ

SALLY N. KO

TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE

MA. VICTORIA F. LIWAG

AMELIA E. ATANACIO

MAXIMA M. MUNOZ

BENJIE L. GONZALES

JOSEPHINE C. GIRON

ZENAIDA A. PALMES

FERNANDO F. PALCON

MA. CRISTINA B. MENDOZA

PERLA C. URTULA

ESMERALDA S. BELTRAN

ROSITA P. LAO

IMELDA M. OPPUS

ZENAIDA N. ANTONIO

TEODORO T. TING

CONTESSA MAY B. GONZAGA

RENATO C. SALVADOR

NORA H. CRISOSTOMO

FLORA O. CADIENTE

JOYCE P. GO

LEA N. FANDINOLA

RODOLFO H. GO

PHILAM LIFE
accident & health

AWARD OF HONOR

WENCESLAO S. GUICO
Batangas-Maligalig Agency

BEATRIZ V. PASTORIN
Cotabato-Jerez Agency

VICENTE O. ANG, JR.
Tan Associates

CREDIT LIFE • PHILAMLIFE • AIG

EDITH J. PRADO
Davao-Huyalid Agency
LEGACY AWARD

JUANITO M. MENDOZA, III
Surigao-Mendoza Agency
LEGACY CIRCLE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

EDITH J. PRADO
Davao-Huyalid Agency
LEGACY CIRCLE

JUANITO M. MENDOZA, III
Surigao-Mendoza Agency
LEGACY CIRCLE

PHILAM LIFE GROUP Insurance

ESTRELLA GLODOBE
Davao-Huyalid Agency
PENSIONS MERIT AWARD

JENNIFER MATURINO-RUIZ
Bataan-Maturino Agency
GROUP MASTERS AWARD

FUND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

SETTLEMENT OPTION CONTRIBUTOR

BENITA H. YAP
TOP

NELIA B. GUMABAY
QUALIFIER

FUTUREFUND CONTRIBUTOR

AGENT CATEGORY	UNIT MANAGER CATEGORY	AGENCY CATEGORY
JEANETTE L. MENDOZA † TOP	ROBERTO E. MENDOZA TOP	JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO TOP
HENEDINA G. PARAISO QUALIFIERS	EDNA S. SORITA QUALIFIER	REYNALDO N. MORTEL QUALIFIER
ANDELYS M. CARILLO QUALIFIERS	LAMBERTO R. AUSTRIA QUALIFIER	MA. LOURDES M. DEL MUNDO QUALIFIER
	MA. ZENAIDA N. ANTONIO QUALIFIER	JUAN A. TAN QUALIFIER
	GINA Z. MENDOZA QUALIFIER	

PHILAM LIFE PERSONAL LINES

ROMEO I. DEL ROSARIO
Mendoza Associates

BEYOND LIMITS
2002 NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

REGIONAL SALES CONFERENCE: Changmai, Bangkok Thailand	• April 2-6
INTERNATIONAL SALES CONFERENCE: Auckland, New Zealand	• April 11-18

* * *

PROGRAM OF EVENTS
(Westin Philippine Plaza & Diamond Hotels)

APRIL 23, 2002 (TUESDAY)

Morning	• Arrival of Awardees & Registration • Welcome Lunch
Afternoon	• Sales Convention
Evening	• Fellowship Night

APRIL 24, 2002 (WEDNESDAY)

Morning	• Breakfast Forum
Afternoon	• Gala Awards

Antonio Associates: Going Beyond Limits

JOSE ISAGANI F. ANTONIO
Sr. Agency Manager

The Fiscal Year 2001 saw the premier agency of Philamlife, the Isagani Antonio Associates, reach new milestones and greater heights in the life insurance business – a towering testimony to its capacity to GO BEYOND ITS LIMITS!

- **The formidable agency broke its first-ever P116 Million FYPI mark and registered a remarkable 21% growth versus its production in Year 2000.** Moreover, for the first time in a single year, the Antonio Associates produced seven **(7) Qualifying Members to the prestigious Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT), one of them even making it as Life and Qualifying Member.**

JEANETTE MENDOZA
Life &
Qualifying Member

EMELITA ABANTO

LOURDES BERNARDO

EDITHA CAPISTRANO

ISABELITA CASTOR

GLICERIA DELEON

EDITHA PENAFLOR

- Another noteworthy achievement is that **Eight (8) Career Agents made it to the Premier Agents Club, an honor club introduced by the American International Assurance, Philamlife's sister company in the Asia Pacific Region.** This elite group of agents uphold the values of outstanding sales performance by meeting high production targets; quality service through exceptional persistency experience; high professionalism through the practice of ethical standards; and the proper selection of business as evidenced by an above-average claims experience.

JEANETTE MENDOZA
Premier Platinum

LOURDES BERNARDO
Premier Gold

ISABELITA CASTOR
Premier Gold

EDITHA PENAFLOR
Premier Gold

MA. ZENAIDA ANTONIO
Premier Silver

NORA CRISOSTOMO
Premier Silver

SYLVIA GAGTO
Premier Silver

CRISTINA MENDOZA
Premier Silver

- In the Antonio Associates, leadership makes the difference. Growth is attained through the concerted effort of everyone – Together Everyone Achieves More. The spirit, the will to win and the will to excel are the things these outstanding agency leaders ignite.

MGR. MA. ZENAIDA ANTONIO

MGR. ROBERTO MENDOZA

MGR. EDUARDO FORDAN

MGR. ORLANDO ABANTO

MGR. AIDA HERNANDEZ

- In the area of marketing, **the Antonio Associates inaugurated its 3rd mall office at the SM City Manila in June 2001**, making Philamlife's products and services readily available and accessible to the Filipino public. In setting up various mall offices, the premier agency strengthens Philamlife's vision of having a *"Philamlife policy in every Filipino home"* by extending its reach to potential clients and increasing public awareness of the benefits of life insurance.

- The agency is proud to have in its fold, **high performing salespeople** who consistently show their best qualities in action. The contributions of the following **20 Career Agents** made 2001 another banner year for the Antonio Associates.

LUCILA BASCON

SARAH PREPENA

CONSOLACION BLANCO

OFELIA VILLANUEVA

VIRGINIA SANTOS

TERESITA MANALO

ROSALINE DEPADUA

VIRGILIO HERNANDEZ

GLEN SALDUA

ANAMAY REGALA

CESAR ONATE

AIDA MATTI

JOCELYN SECRETARIO

ARMANDO ORDONEZ

ELENA ENRIQUEZ

MARILYN CANAR

CONCEPCION AQUINO

NORMA BAYONGAN

ZARAHJANE DEZUNIGA

GRACE CABOTAGE

- And finally, in the area of agency expansion, **the Antonio Associates gave birth to a new agency, the R. Bernardo Associates,** truly the mark of excellence in leadership by Philamlife's No. 1 Agency. Through this special achievement, it fulfilled its role in building a well-trained, competent and customer- oriented agency force.

MGR. ROBERTO BERNARDO

- *We're No. 1 Philamlife Agency*
- *The Leader in new products promotion*
- *We have complete selling paraphernalia that make our agents more effective and productive*
- *We have the most extensive training programs for new and seasoned agents*
- *We have a successful financial assistance programs for agents as well as managers*
- *With the biggest network of sales offices in Metro Manila and neighboring towns*

ISAGANI ANTONIO ASSOCIATES

We're almost everywhere to serve you better

PHILAMLIFE & GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY

- SM SOUTHMALL, Lower Ground Floor, Tel. No. 800-5128
- SM CITY MANILA, 5th Level, Tel. Nos. 522-7752 & 400-0114
- SM CITY BACOOR, 3rd Level, Tel. No. (046) 970-4035
- 2/F, Dao I Bldg., 189 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, Tel. Nos. 892-8970; 812-3243 Email: iaa@netasia.net
- 11/F, Philamlife Madrigal Bldg., Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Tel. Nos. 807-4314 & 809-4349
- GF, Allen Bldg., National Highway, Landayan San Pedro, Laguna

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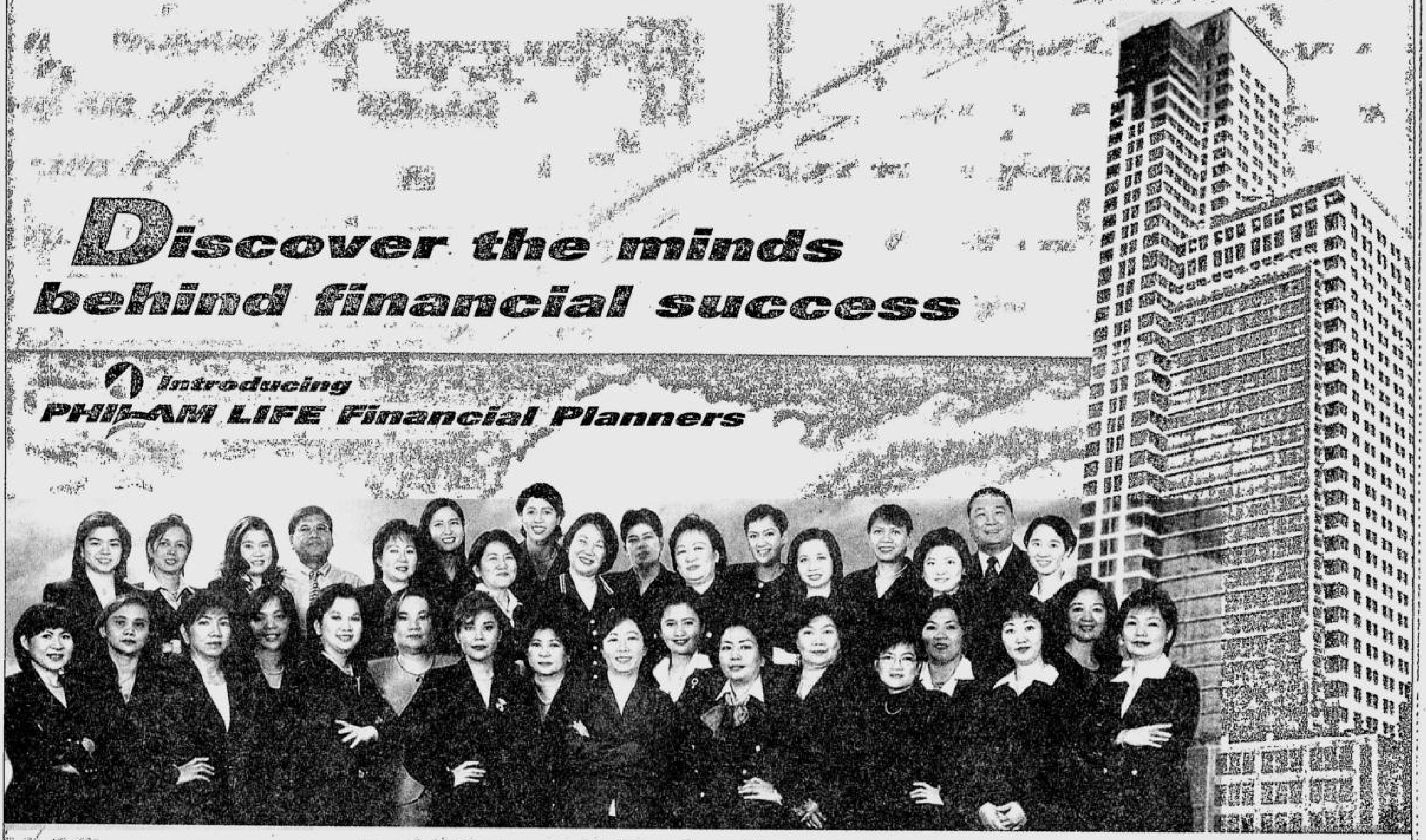

Valerie Wong de Leon, LUTCF · Sarah Prepeña · Ma. Theresa Lucila · Oscar Tiangco · Remedios Dublado
Geraldine Marie Limpo · Patricia Sardalla, FLMI · Antonina Solomon · Henedina Paraiso · Evangeline Ilag
Lourdes Gloria, LUTCF · Josephine Giron · Emily Toledo · Teresita Palor · Nancy Go Tan · Rodolfo Mallari
Jeanette Fabico · Edna Parreno · Benjie Gonzales · Nieves San Pedro · Ma. Rosario Lumanlan · Leticia Allado
Ma. Isabel Deveza · Junnette Ladrido, LUTCF · Consolacion Blanco · Helen Tan · Thelma Jennifer Reyes
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You can call us at (632) 528-2000 / (63) 918-9226956

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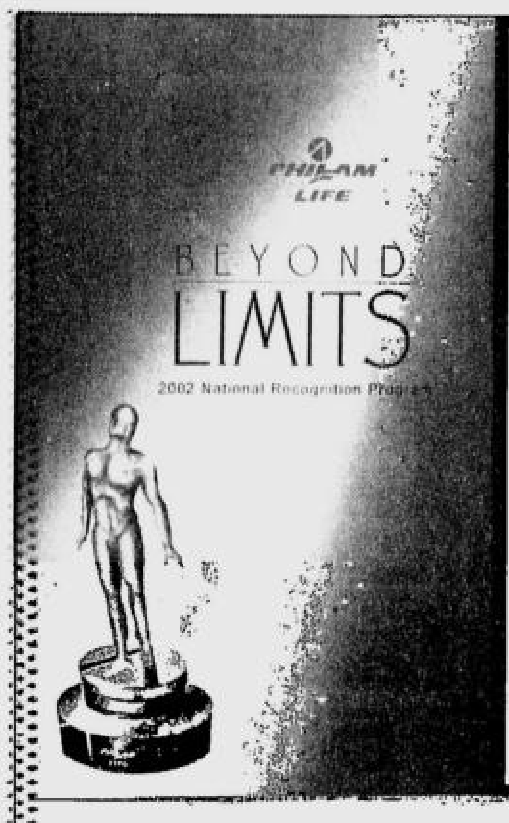


TAN
ASSOCIATES

The leading Chinese agency of Philamlife flew high in 2001 posting P65 million in first year premium income, which translates to a 17% growth over its previous year's accomplishment. Truly another outstanding performance for the agency known for its quality people and quality business!

PHILAM LIFE FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

SHIRLEY L. CO

JACINTA Y. PHOA

CORAZON KI ANG

NG CHO LIAN

CHAN SIU ENG

VENECIA C. LIM

GUEI TAY GI

PHILAM LIFE CHAIRMAN'S BOARD

LETICIA G.O. ANG

JEANETTE C. FABICO

ROSITA P. LAO

VALERIE U. W. DE LEON

DAI HIONG SHIN

PHILAM LIFE PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

LORENZ A. Y. HOW

SALLY N. KO

ERNESTO A. LIM

LING LING S. LEE

LOLITA N. OBNAMIA

ALICIA S. AQUILINO

JOSE K. TIU

JOHN ARTHUR O. TAN

ROSITA O. LI

RHODA L. TAN

PHILAM LIFE accident & health

VICENTE O. ANG, JR.
A&H Award of Honor

VICENTE O. ANG, JR.
MRG Challenge 2001 Qualifier

FUND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

BENITA H. YAP
Top Settlement Option Contributor

JUAN A. TAN
Qualifier
Future Fund Contributor - Agency Category

Special Achievement AWARD

SHIRLEY L. CO
1st Runner-up Manila - Agent Category

TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE
Top Manila - Unit Manager Category

JUAN A. TAN
1st Runner-up Manila - Agency Manager Category

Agents Who Satisfied the Production Requirements for the 2002 MDRT

CORAZON KI ANG
Life & Qualifying Member
14years

JACINTA Y. PHOA
Life & Qualifying Member
12years

VALERIE U. W. DE LEON
Qualifying Member
6years

SHIRLEY L. CO
Qualifying Member
5years

LETICIA G.O. ANG
Qualifying Member
4years

CHAN SIU ENG
Qualifying Member
3years

JEANETTE C. FABICO
Candidate for 2002
Qualifying Member

SALLY N. KO
Candidate for 2002
Qualifying Member

Premier AGENTS CLUB

PLATINUM

SHIRLEY L. CO

JACINTA Y. PHOA

CORAZON KI ANG

GOLD

CHAN SIU ENG

LETICIA G.O. ANG

NG CHO LIAN

VALERIE U. W. DE LEON

SILVER

VENECIA C. LIM

SALLY N. KO

TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE

ROSITA P. LAO

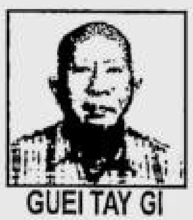
IQA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY AWARD

NG CHO LIAN
25th year

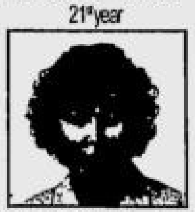
JACINTA Y. PHOA
23rd year

SHIRLEY L. CO
21st year

CHAN SIU ENG
18th year


GUEI TAY GI
18th year

CORAZON KI ANG
16th year


VENECIA C. LIM
4th year

LETICIA G.O. ANG
3rd year

AMELIA O. HONG
1st year

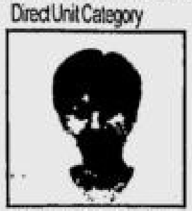
the PRESIDENT'S CABINET

JUAN A. TAN
Agency Category

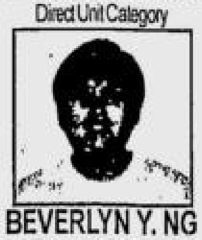
TERESITA G. MONTEVERDE
Direct Unit Category

CORAZON KI ANG
Direct Unit Category

SEGUNDINA O. TAN
Direct Unit Category


CARINA G. LU
Direct Unit Category

LETICIA G.O. ANG
Direct Unit Category


BEVERLYN Y. NG
Direct Unit Category

MILTON Y. TAN'
Direct Unit Category

LIM SU CHAN
Direct Unit Category

TAMARAW COUNCIL

SIA LIM KENG

TAMARAW CLUB

CONCHITA L. TY
MARCOS V. TAN
BENITA H. YAP
ANTONIO J. TAN
EMELITA C. LAO
RAQUEL NESTLE I. CO

ROOKIE AGENTS

BENITA H. YAP
ANNA MAY B. NIEVA
LETICIA L. CHIOK

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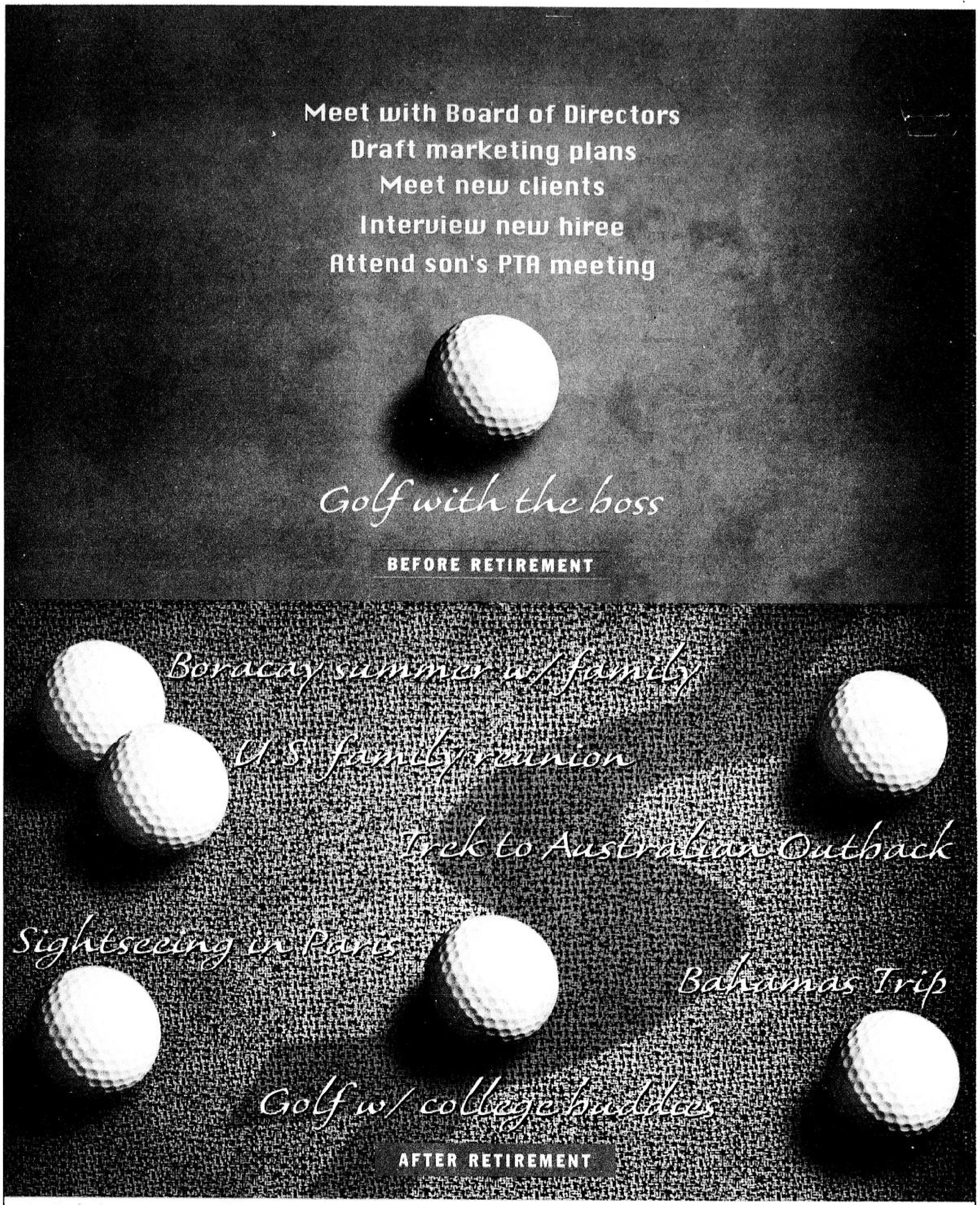
Meet with Board of Directors
Draft marketing plans
Meet new clients
Interview new hiree
Attend son's PTA meeting
Golf with the boss
BEFORE RETIREMENT
Boracay summer w/ family
U.S. family reunion
Trek to Australian Outback
Sightseeing in Paris
Bahamas Trip
Golf w/ college buddies
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**In the last 10 years, the value of the US dollar has remained stable (Bankers' Association of the Philippines reference rates, 2002). Just imagine how much you'll earn once you retire.*

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Or visit the nearest Philamlife office. You can also reach us in Hong Kong (852)-2591-2218

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PHILAM SAVINGS BANK Savings & Mortgage
PHILAM ASSET MANAGEMENT Mutual Fund Investment
PHILAM PROPERTIES Property Development
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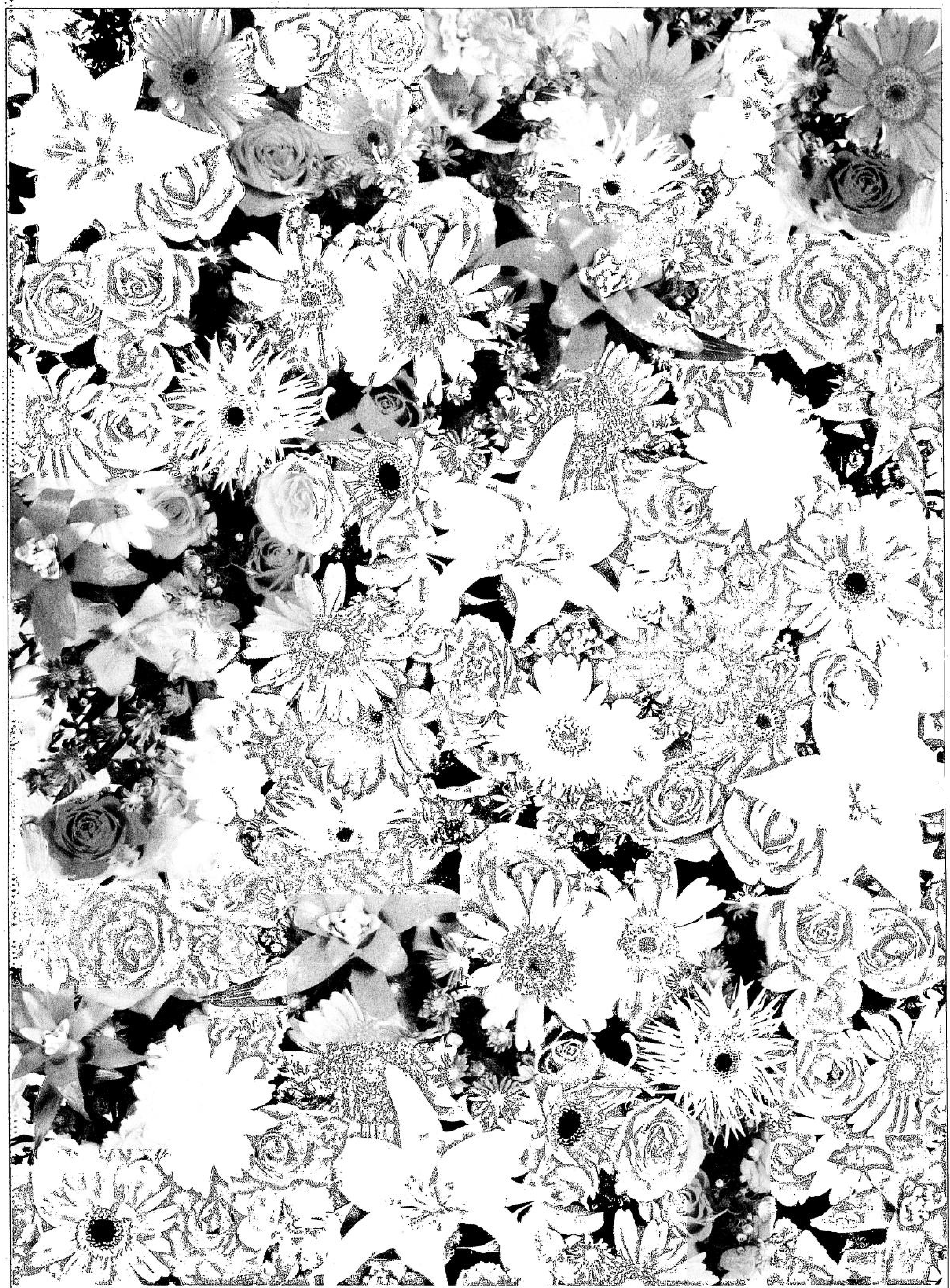

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